

Monday

Senior... Michael Binyon, in Bonn, presents a portrait of Willy Brandt, West Germany's elder statesman, who is 70 today.

Citizens Russell Davies provides the lowdown on life in Cambridge.

Ghosts... Robert Fisk reports on the grim facts of life in Beirut, where death is a constant companion.

Of Christmas... The Monday Page comes face to face with the festive season.



Yet to come Macao: what does the future hold for the Portuguese colony as neighbouring Hongkong prepares for 1997?

Judge 'has sympathy' in sex case

Judge Brian Gibbons, QC, said at the Central Criminal Court that he had considerable sympathy for a man who had sexual intercourse with a girl aged seven. "It strikes me as being one of the kind of accidents that could almost happen to anyone", he said.

Korchnoi mugged

Viktor Korchnoi, he exiled Russian chess grandmaster, was mugged on Tower Bridge on Thursday night, it was revealed last night. Mr Korchnoi, aged 52, is in London for the world chess championship semi-final.

Rothschild deal

Rothschild Group, the holding company of NM Rothschild, the merchant bankers, has agreed to buy the maximum permitted stake in Smith Brothers, the London stockjobbers.

Peugeot crisis

The French Prime Minister is stepping in to defuse the crisis in the French car industry after the decision of the Peugeot factory to shut down its strike-hit Poissy plant.

Budget test

The Council of Ministers is to test the legality of the controversial EEC budget. The Council believes at least four points in it could be challenged before the European Court.

Drink warning

Magistrates in Essex have threatened to impose prison sentences on motorists convicted of drink-driving offences. Essex takes lead page 4.

Money savers

With only six shopping days left to Christmas, Family Money has been investigating ways of saving by shopping in France.

India revolution

India is planning to revolutionize the appearance of its locally built cars which at present look as though they belong to the 1950s.

Neill dismissed

Arsenal have dismissed Terry Neill, their manager for seven years, after a run of poor results, including a home defeat in the Milk Cup by Walsall.

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Two shot dead as store chief is rescued from IRA

From Richard Ford, Ballinamore, co Leitrim

A soldier and a policeman, members of the Irish Republic's security forces, were shot dead yesterday in fierce gun battles as Mr Don Tidy, the kidnapped chairman of Associated British Foods, was successfully freed. The policeman was later named as Mr Peter Sheenan, aged 33 a recruit from the police training depot at Templemore, co Tipperary. Mr Tidy, aged 49, was unharmed after his 22-day ordeal at the hands of the Provisional IRA who had demanded £5m from the Associated British Foods company for his safe release.

Last night, looking tired and with a grey beard, he made emotional telephone calls to his family at their home in Rathfriland, co Dublin, and to his business colleagues. A detective, Mr Donal Kelleher, was shot in the leg when he threw himself in front of Mr Tidy as his captors turned their guns on him. A second soldier was injured, along with two members of the kidnap gang during three separate gun battles in isolated woodland near the village of Ballinamore, co Leitrim.

Four members of the gang escaped a dragnet of 1,000 police and army forces in the biggest security operation in the history of the Irish state. But detectives believe that they are still hiding in woods two miles north of the village near the road leading to the border with co Fermanagh. A thousand extra troops, assisted by army helicopters, were drafted into the area and will begin a major search at daylight this morning.

In Dublin, the *Dail* and the city's Roman Catholic and Protestant archbishops welcomed Mr Tidy's safe release, but expressed sympathy to the families of the two young men who died. Inspector Patrick Malachy said: "Mr Tidy is in good health. He is jumping for joy at his release, he is very excited and overjoyed at being free again."

Mr Garry Weston, chairman of Associated British Foods, said: "We are supremely delighted on behalf of his family and all of his colleagues." Chief Supt James McNally said: "It was an excellent day's work, saddened by the deaths of two very brave young men. Mr Tidy was unharmed and I have just been speaking to his daughter, who is delighted at her father's release."

Mr Tidy's release comes after one of the most intensive security operations ever mounted in the Republic, and occurred only 24 hours after it was revealed the kidnapers had renewed their ransom demand for £5m. This had been rejected by Associated British Foods, who had taken into account the policy of the British and Irish governments that no cash be paid for kidnap victims.

Mr Tidy was abducted as he drove his daughter to school only a few months after the Provisional IRA had been foiled in an attempt to kidnap Mr Weston, from his home in co Wicklow.



Freedom day: Carol Compton being escorted from court while the judges deliberate.

Guardian missile leak Judge orders 'mole' unmasked

By Richard Evans

A civil servant who leaked that it was entitled to protect its anonymous source from being identified by markings on the document, and declared that national security required that the official be traced and removed. Within one hour of the court order the photostat of the ministry memorandum received by *The Guardian* was handed over in a lawyer's office complete with identifying marks which could enable security officials to uncover the "mole". The document, marked "secret", involved a memo from Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, to the Prime Minister, of which there were only seven copies, in which he dealt with publicity surrounding the arrival of cruise missiles at Greenham Common air base. The newspaper published the text in full on October 31. When asked originally to return the document the newspaper said that it could only do so after removing any markings. Mr Heseltine and the Attorney General successfully sued the newspaper in the High Court on Thursday to return the document intact, and the Court of Appeal upheld the ruling yesterday. The newspaper had relied on an untested clause of the Contempt of Court Act, 1981, allowing newspapers to protect their sources of information. Section 10 of the Act provides that no court can require disclosure of sources unless "it is established to the satisfaction of the court that disclosure is necessary in the interests of justice or national security, or for the prevention of disorder or crime."

Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls, said that the case raised once again "the extent to which journalists are allowed to protect their sources of information." But national security required that the "mole" be identified at the earliest possible moment and removed from his position. "This is blindingly obvious". The court granted the newspaper leave to appeal to the House of Lords over interpretation of the act; but the document had to be handed over immediately. "There are occasions, rare perhaps, where it is for the Court of Appeal to reach a final decision," Sir John said. Mr Peter Preston, editor of *The Guardian*, last night defended his decision to comply with the court ruling. "Something I have preached all my journalistic life is that the law, whether you like it or not, or whether you want it changed or not, has to be submitted to."

"This was the first case under section 10 of the Contempt Act which was supposed to give journalists protection for their information." Continued on back page, col 3

Brittan hits out at closed shop

By Our Political Correspondent

Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, warned the unions last night that the closed shop could be in jeopardy if they failed to learn the important lessons of the National Graphical Association (NGA) dispute at Warrington.

In a speech on the subject of "Ending the Closed Shop", Mr Brittan told a meeting of businessmen in Northampton, North Yorkshire: "The closed shop is itself, however enforced, a flagrant and fundamental denial of individual liberties."

"Our employment legislation has rightly been aimed at curbing the worst abuses which the closed shop brings with it. But while trade unionists go on believing that it can be right for them to insist on their fellow workers joining a union whether they want to or not, this issue will continue to poison industrial relations."

"Moreover, no one should have any doubt that, however temporarily comfortable it may be, even for some employers, the suppression of individual workers' rights which closed shop agreements involve is not only morally wrong but deeply damaging to the economy and jobs."

He also said that the closed shop, as with every rigid monopoly attempting to secure immunity from market forces, contained the seeds of its own destruction: the respite was only temporary. Mr Brittan added: "Change there has to be, unless whole industries are to die."

The fact that the Home Secretary should speak in such tough and unrelenting language gives an indication of the Government's concern on an issue which did not feature in last June's manifesto.

But Whitehall sources did point out last night that Mr Tom King, the Secretary of State for Employment, had it in his power to bring forward the closed shop ballot deadline contained in the Employment Act, 1982.

Unions have until November next year to win 80 per cent support for closed shop agreements. If they fail employees have rights to non-membership. But Mr Norman Tebbit announced last year: "If there is evidence that the closed shop is still being operated intolerantly and inflexibly, I shall not hesitate to bring forward the date of implementation."

Ministers are thought to have reviewed that deadline in October, but there would be nothing to stop Mr King advancing the ballot date if the Prime Minister and the Cabinet felt that NGA intolerance and inflexibility demanded a stronger response than a threat from Mr Brittan.

Nanny free but guilty of arson

From Peter Nichols Livorno

Carol Compton, the Scottish nanny held by the Italians for 17 months in pre-trial detention, walked out of the court of assizes here tonight a free woman after being found not guilty of attempted murder.

The court sentenced her to two and a half years in prison for arson and attempted arson but this meant her immediate release.

As applause broke out in the court, Miss Compton, aged 21, was immediately whisked away for a last look at her cell. Indeed, when she had entered the court room earlier in the day in a dark blue pin-striped dress and with a beige jacket over her arm it seemed she was expecting her eventual freedom.

The bench of two professional and six lay judges acquitted her on the principal charge of attempted murder on the ground of insufficient proof. On the five charges of arson she was acquitted on one and found guilty on the four others, two of them reduced to attempted arson. The public prosecutor argued the defence by advising the judges: "Acquit Carol Compton only if in conscience you believe that today you would entrust your child to her."

Yet when the closure was moved for a vote on the substantive question of second reading, Mr Mitchell scraped together the requisite 100 MPs in majority support - although some of them then voted against the Bill itself.

The result left the Law Society almost speechless (Our Property Correspondent writes). The society offered a terse "no comment" when asked for comments.

The Consumers' Association, which played a vital part in preparing Mr Mitchell's Bill, claimed the vote represented a victory for its campaign. A spokesman said: "This is a good day for house buyers. Now MPs can get down to the fine tuning and ensure that the new arrangements for conveyancing provide the kind of protection for the consumer that we are confident can be achieved."

Mr Mark Boleat, for the Buildings Societies' Association, welcomed the Government's intention to give building societies the power to undertake conveyancing. "It is something we have already requested," he said.

He added, however, that the association criticized the bill for failing to include adequate safeguards for the consumer. Discussing the Bill earlier, Mr John Spalding, chief general manager of the Halifax Building Society, said conveyancing law and practice had not adapted to meet the needs of today's home-owning society. He said societies were prepared to take up conveyancing in competition with solicitors for their customers' benefit.

Mr David Ashford, chairman of the National Association of conveyancers, representing non-solicitors who do conveyancing, said: "It is very exciting and we are cheered by its success."

Mr Ashford said the vote represented a "massive defeat for the pro-monopolists, the Law Society and their cohorts". MPs' names, page 2 Parliamentary report, page 4

Inflation at lowest for 14 years

By Peter Wilson-Smith

The yearly rate of inflation fell to 4.8 per cent last month and will end the year at the lowest level for 14 years, Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Employment, said yesterday.

"Today's fall in inflation to 4.8 per cent rounds off a year of good news on the economy which has seen us climb out of recession and achieve one of the fastest growth rates in Europe."

"It means that for 1983 prices will have risen more slowly than at any time since 1969," Mr King said. The latest figures confirm inflationary pressures remain weak. Last month alone prices rose 0.4 per cent largely due to higher telephone charges and fresh-food prices although this was partly offset by price cuts for wine and second-hand cars.

However, the year-on-year inflation rate is still expected to edge up ahead because of the favourable trend in the same period last year. Prices fell last December, helped by a 2 per cent cut in the mortgage rate, so even if prices showed no increase at all this month, the 12-month rate will still rise.

Officials expect inflation by the end of the year to be running a little above five per cent and comfortably in line with the Government's predictions. However international comparisons show that Britain is roughly in line with the average in other industrialized countries of 5.2 per cent and some important competitors are doing much better. Inflation in the United States is 2.9 per cent and only 2.6 per cent in West Germany.

The importance of keeping inflation down if Britain is to compete in world markets was hammered home by both Mr King and by Sir Terence Beckett, director general of the Confederation of British Industry.

Sir Terence said: "This augurs well for attaining the Chancellor's forecast of 4.5 per cent by the end of next year. But we must not relax our efforts to keep pay settlements low as part of the effort to improve competitiveness."

Lebanon leader in surprise Libya visit

From Robert Fisk, Beirut

President Amin Gemayel arrived unexpectedly in the Libyan capital of Tripoli last night for talks with Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi, the Libyan leader, as another of Lebanon's allegedly unbreakable ceasefires permitted the authorities to reopen Beirut airport for the first time this month.

The truce had been agreed at a long meeting in Damascus between leaders of at least three of the militia groups which have been fighting around the airport and in the mountains east of Beirut.

The Syrian orientation of the ceasefire and the Lebanese leader's almost unprecedented visit to Libya - at Colonel Ghaddafi's own request - suggests that the Lebanese Government is now anxious to see just how far Syria and its allies are prepared to go in supporting the Gemayel regime. They may well be doing so with the encouragement of the Americans, whose military confrontation with Syria has been in danger of getting out of control. Colonel Simon Kassis, the head of Lebanese military intelligence, has been in Damascus for discussions with his Syrian opposite number and the highly charged rhetoric that used to be exchanged between Syria and Lebanon has now disappeared.

The Lebanese had "frozen" their relations with Libya on November 23 because they complained that Colonel Ghaddafi's radio and newspapers were making "verbal attacks" on Lebanon. Yesterday all this was forgotten. Indeed it was the Libyan news agency which first announced Mr Gemayel's arrival.

Libya maintains a token battalion of troops in the Syrian-occupied Bekaa valley and the Lebanese President will undoubtedly have asked the Libyan leader how long he intends to extend their uninvited visit. Several hundred Revolutionary Guards from Iran are also quartered around Baalbek - they were brought in by Syria more than a year and a half ago - and it will be interesting to see if the Lebanese authorities extend any courtesies to Tehran.

Tories help house Bill on its way

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

The Cabinet's compromise proposals to loosen the solicitors' £1,000m monopoly on house conveyancing was rejected outright by the House of Commons yesterday.

Mr Austin Mitchell's Private Member's legislation, the House Buyers Bill, was given a second reading by 96 votes to 76, a majority of 20. The Bill, which was backed by 25 Conservative MPs, now goes into committee for scrutiny and amendment. Mr Mitchell, Labour MP for Great

Grimsby, said he was confident that a system of licensed competition would be enacted. He said: "It would be monstrous if the Government tried to strangle the Bill in committee. The House has rejected their proposals."

However, Cabinet and Law Society opposition is expected to ensure the eventual death of Mr Mitchell's measure. Committee hearings, meanwhile will keep public interest alive and the Government may have to produce bolder and clearer plans for reform.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Solicitor General, failed to reassure Conservative backbench critics. He explained that the Government hoped to allow solicitors employed by banks and building societies to do conveyancing, although there might be problems for solicitors with a conflict of interest between employer and client.

He also promised a Law Commission committee would be formed to consider simplifying practice and procedure in conveyancing. Replying, Mr Mitchell feared the Government had undercut his Conservative support. He spoke of the public being

Art treasure talks collapse

By Geraldine Norman Sale Room Correspondent

Negotiations between the Duke of Devonshire and the British Museum over the biggest art transfer to the nation of recent times have collapsed. Crisp statements from each side announced their failure to agree last night, after talks lasting more than a year.

The Duke had offered the museum a group of 74 Old Master drawings, including works by Rembrandt, Raphael, Rubens and Van Dyck. The bone of contention is their value which seems to have been set at various figures in the £3m to £6m range by different experts. While the theoretical market value of the drawings is of much academic interest, the real argument as far as the Duke and the museum are concerned rests with the sum he would be



The Duke of Devonshire: Offered 74 drawings.

left with after tax. Numerous different formulas for calculating this figure have apparently been explored without result. The final move seems to have been the biggest tax-free offer the museum could stretch to after taking a very deep breath. The difference over valuation is also due to a disagreement between top art market experts.

We take this opportunity to wish our many friends the compliments of the season and best wishes for 1984

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Training scheme for Services fails to attract young entrants

The armed Forces Youth training scheme launched in August has so far been a flop with only about 600 people being accepted to fill the 1,900 places which were being offered this autumn.

Teachers closer to salary overhaul

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

Plans to overhaul the salary structure of teachers took an important step forward this week when teachers' leaders agreed on a new entry grade for all new recruits.

No national papers on New Year's Day

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

There will be no national Sunday newspapers on New Year's Day because a pay dispute between the National Graphical Association and Fleet Street publishers.

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Shaping up: Mr Ian McIntyre, a British Museum conservation officer, working on the eighth century York Helmet which is to go on display at York Castle Museum next year (Photograph: Brian Harris).

Post strike may widen in London

A postmen's strike in west London will prevent any mail being delivered in the area before Christmas.

The dispute, which began over the abolition of night sorting, has prevented any deliveries in Shepherd's Bush since December 1 when postmen walked out in protest at the withholding of bonus payments.

Councillor resigns over clash at Brent

By Rupert Morris

A Labour councillor resigned yesterday from Brent council on protest at the violent scenes on Thursday night which preceded the Conservative group's assumption of power.

Bail refused for policeman

A policeman accused of murdering a Roman Catholic teenager carrier this week was refused bail in the Ulster High Court yesterday.

Road traffic increasing

Road traffic was up by 3 per cent in the third quarter of this year compared with 1982.

Airman held on secrets charge

Paul John Davies, aged 21, who served with an RAF signals unit in Cyprus, was remanded in custody for a month yesterday by Bow Street Magistrates' Court.

Olivier better

Lord Olivier, aged 76, the actor, is "doing well and making a good recovery" at St Thomas Hospital, London, 10 days after undergoing a kidney operation.

Draw ends Ribli's hopes of victory

By Harry Golombek, Chess Correspondent

Zoltan Ribli, the young Hungarian grandmaster, saw his hopes of beating the former world champion Vassily Smyslov fade when the tenth game of their match in the Acorn Computers World championship semi-finals at the Great Eastern Hotel, in London, ended in a draw on Thursday.

Police given national case rules

National rules for police forces working together on important investigations are to be introduced in the new year to prevent the problems in the Yorkshire Ripper investigation.

A "policy file" will be built up to audit decisions. Detectives will note down why they have taken on a particular decision. The file will be attached to the case papers.

Rate-capping 'blow' to democracy

by Anthony Bevin, Political Correspondent

Sir Jack Smart, chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said yesterday that the proposed legislation on rate-capping would "deal a deadly blow to local democracy."

Post Office profits drop £3m to £39m

The Post Office made £39m profit in the first six months of this financial year up to September.

However in spite of an increase in the number of letters posted, profits were £3m less than the same period last year.

How Reuters struck gold on the market

By Philip Robinson

Behind the push to get a stock exchange quote for Reuters lies a desire by Fleet Street proprietors to gain a large slice of cash as shareholders of the international news agency now earning huge profits from its business information systems.

Rebel Tories in House Buyers Bill vote

The Conservative MPs who voted in favour of the House Buyers Bill at yesterday's second reading were:

Mr Robert Banks (Harrowgate), Mr Richard Body (Holt), Mr Christopher Chope (Southampton), Mr Patrick Cormack (Staffordshire South), Mr Hugh Dykes (Harrow, East), Mr Nigel Forman (Carshalton and Wallington), Sir Ian Gilmour (Chesham and Amersham), Sir Philip Goodhart (Beckenham), Mr Jeremy Hayes (Harrow), Mr David Heathcoat-Amory (Wells), Mr Alan Howarth (Stratford-on-Avon), Mr Gerald Howarth (Cannock and Burntwood), Mr Toby Jessel (Twickenham), Mr Robert Jones (Hertfordshire West), Mr Michael Knowles (Nottingham East), Mr John Maples (Leicester), Mr Robin Maxwell-Hyslop (Tiverton), Mr Christopher Murphy (Weymouth and Portland), Mr Richard Oatway (Nottingham North), Mr Keith Raffan (Delyn), Mr Richard Ryder (Norfolk-Mid), Mr Richard Shepherd (Aldridge-Brownhills), Mr Frederick Silverthorn (Manchester Withington) and Mr Roger Sims (Christlehurst).

Journalists will continue strike

Journalists at the Richmond and Twickenham Times yesterday decided to continue their strike despite a decision by their national leaders to abide by the law and withdraw their instruction authorizing the stoppage.

The executive of the National Union of Journalists rescinded its strike order because it would have forfeited a right of appeal to the House of Lords if it had done so.

Heavy fines imposed on Warrington pickets

Heavy fines were imposed yesterday at Warrington magistrates' court on demonstrators involved in the violence outside the Messenger Group Newspaper print works at Winwick Quay on the night of November 23.

Pickets who admitted using threatening words and behaviour were ordered to pay between £300 and £250 fines. Others were convicted of obstructing the highway.

GREEN THUMB GLOVES A GIFT FOR EVERY GARDENER.

Advertisement for Green Thumb Gloves. The text says: "Synchemicals range of Green Thumb gloves makes an ideal present for every gardener. They are good looking, hardwearing and above all practical, with a range of styles and sizes for men and women." It includes an illustration of a hand holding a garden tool and a box of gloves.

Sale Room Lighter fetches £1,430

By Geraldine Norman, Sale Room Correspondent

For the first time yesterday Sotheby's gave cigarette lighters the accolade of being included in one of their sales. An 18 carat gold lighter by Dunhill incorporating a watch in its side and dating from 1926 sold for £1,430 (estimate £500-£800).

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Ex-MP cleared of election overspending

The Home Office has apologized to a former MP for mistakenly reporting him to the Director of Public Prosecutions for overspending at the last election.

Because of a misprint in the official Home Office return of election expenses, Mr Edynfed Basistone successfully for the Social Democrats, was wrongly recorded as having spent more than the legal maximum.

Correction

Ms Ruth Harrison, former political assistant to Mr Gerald Brown, MP for St Helens South, is a divorced woman and should have been described in yesterday's report as a single parent.

Overseas selling prices: £275, £285, £295, £305, £315, £325, £335, £345, £355, £365, £375, £385, £395, £405, £415, £425, £435, £445, £455, £465, £475, £485, £495, £505, £515, £525, £535, £545, £555, £565, £575, £585, £595, £605, £615, £625, £635, £645, £655, £665, £675, £685, £695, £705, £715, £725, £735, £745, £755, £765, £775, £785, £795, £805, £815, £825, £835, £845, £855, £865, £875, £885, £895, £905, £915, £925, £935, £945, £955, £965, £975, £985, £995, £1,005, £1,015, £1,025, £1,035, £1,045, £1,055, £1,065, £1,075, £1,085, £1,095, £1,105, £1,115, £1,125, £1,135, £1,145, £1,155, £1,165, £1,175, £1,185, £1,195, £1,205, £1,215, £1,225, £1,235, £1,245, £1,255, £1,265, £1,275, £1,285, £1,295, £1,305, £1,315, £1,325, £1,335, £1,345, £1,355, £1,365, £1,375, £1,385, £1,395, £1,405, £1,415, £1,425, £1,435, £1,445, £1,455, £1,465, £1,475, £1,485, £1,495, £1,505, £1,515, £1,525, £1,535, £1,545, £1,555, £1,565, £1,575, £1,585, £1,595, £1,605, £1,615, £1,625, £1,635, £1,645, £1,655, £1,665, 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Sex with children could happen to anyone accidentally, judge says

There were gasps of astonishment from a public gallery in the Central Criminal Court yesterday as a senior judge defended a man who had had sexual intercourse with a friend's seven-year-old daughter.

"It strikes me as being one of the kind of accidents that could almost happen to anyone," Judge Gibbens said.

The judge, aged 71, who has two sons and a daughter, added: "This is, of course, a serious offence against a little child. I hope the public will not misunderstand me when I say what I do."

He said that he had considerable sympathy with William Watson-Sweeney, aged 37, a builder, said to have a serious drink problem.

"For some moments people like this lose their natural restraint," Judge Gibbens said.

Watson-Sweeney, of Vernon Road, Guildford, Surrey, admitted having unlawful sexual intercourse with the girl. He not guilty plea to raping her was accepted.

He was further remanded in custody until Monday. "I want to see if there is any other punishment available rather than prison," Judge Gibbens said.



Judge Gibbens: "Restraints can be lost."

Mr Philip Singer, for the prosecution, said that Watson-Sweeney met the child and her mother while shopping.

He had been drinking heavily and asked the girl whether she would help him with some household chores. When he got her to his bedroom he removed her clothes and had intercourse. He gave her some sherry and took her home. The distressed girl told her mother, who informed the police.

Watson-Sweeney at first told detectives: "You've got to be joking". But within minutes he broke down and confessed: "I must have been drinking too much."

"My God, I feel terrible about this. I wasn't legless, but I wasn't sober. She said she knew what mummies and daddies did in bedrooms."

Mr Jeremy Carter-Manning, for the defence, said that his client was "full of remorse and shame". The offence was an isolated one and the memory of it would remain with Watson-Sweeney and his family "for the rest of their lives". He realizes that he deserves everything he gets.

Mrs Brenda Bridge, the wife of the Dean of Guildford, the Very Rev Antony Bridge, was in court. She had been friendly with Watson-Sweeney and his wife, who have a younger son, and described them as a lovely family.

Judge Gibbens received considerable publicity two months ago after he criticized a jury for acquitting a young burglar. Three years earlier he condemned workers at Heathrow for their dishonesty.



Plucking time for turkeys at Marlow, Buckinghamshire (Photograph: Bill Warhurst).

Plea to free husband of dead solicitor

By A Staff Reporter

The husband of the murdered solicitor Mrs Janice Weston was still being questioned by the police last night after the failure of a High Court attempt to free him from custody.

The court was told that Mr Anthony Weston, a property developer, would either be charged with the murder of his wife, who was 37, or be freed by 2 pm today.

Lord Justice Watkins, sitting with Mr Justice Mann said that the application for a writ of habeas corpus had not been made out.

Mr Weston, aged 39, has been held at Huntingdon police station, Cambridgeshire, a few miles from the A1 lay-by where his wife's battered body was found in September, since shortly after noon on Thursday.

Mr Dermot Wright, counsel for Mr Weston, said that he should either be charged or released immediately. "He is now refusing to answer any more questions and will not say any more," he told the Queen's Bench Divisional Court.

"What we say is that the police are holding Mr Weston, knowing that he is at a low emotional ebb, since he has suffered for some months since the dramatic and brutal murder of his wife, holding him at a time when obviously he is very depressed and emotional so that they may, by holding him in the police station - for most of the time in a cell - gain some kind of confession or admission to the murder from him. We say that is wrong."

Mr Timothy Barnes, for the police, said he repudiated any suggestion that they were trying to force a confession out of him and rejected a suggestion that they were "scraping the barrel".

As a result of new information which had come into their possession, the police wanted to interview Mr Weston further before charging him or releasing him, Mr Barnes said.

After a 30-minute hearing Det Chief Supt Len Bradley, who is leading the murder inquiry, said that he would abide by his undertaking to charge or release Mr Weston by 2 pm today.

Mr Weston has told the police that he last saw his wife the day before she died and that he spent the weekend of her death on business in France. Mrs Weston, who lives at Addison Avenue, Holland Park, west London, was a partner in the legal firm of Charles Russell, of Lincoln's Inn.

Kidnap gang leader jailed for 18 years

George Panae, aged 30, the gang leader who masterminded the kidnap of Mr Emmanuel Nureb and his wife Maria, was jailed at the Central Criminal Court yesterday for 18 years.

Anastasi Panae, aged 36, his brother, was sentenced to 10 years and Donald Gray, aged 27, their accomplice, to eight years.

The couple were kidnapped and held captive for a £2m ransom for five days.

Sir James Miskin, QC, the Recorder, told George Panae: "I am quite satisfied that you were the architect of these dreadful matters. You masterminded the terror struck into Maria and Emmanuel when they were first overpowered, held at knife point, and then bound gagged and blindfolded."

"It was you who took the gamble and organized their terrifying ordeal, you who frightened the husband into speaking on the phone to his father, and you who made those terrifying demands for a £2m ransom and accompanied those demands with disgusting threats."

But Panae, a "wicked and devious man" had reckoned

without the courage of Mrs Nureb, aged 25, who was a "brave and highly intelligent young woman."

Sir James said that cases of kidnap and blackmail were on the increase and there had to be sentences with a "deterrent effect".

George Panae, a driving instructor, of Telford Avenue, Streatham, south London, Anastasi Panae, a fish shop proprietor, of Dunston Road, Battersea, south London, had both pleaded not guilty. Gray, an unemployed former boxer, of Raleigh Road, Brixton, south London, pleaded guilty to his role in the crimes and gave evidence for the Crown.

After the trial, Mr and Mrs Nureb said that they wanted to forget the experience. Mr Nureb revealed that his wife was expecting her first baby in the spring. But they had feared for their unborn baby's life because of her ordeal in the witness box.

He advised any other victims of a kidnap attempt not to obey blackmail demands but to report immediately to the police.

Thatcher bomb 'cry for help'

A north London schoolboy aged 14 was "making a cry for help" when he posted a bomb to Mrs Margaret Thatcher on St Patrick's day, a detective said yesterday.

Det Insp Brendan Gibb-Gray, of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch told the Central Criminal Court that he had made extensive investigations into the case but could find "absolutely no evidence whatsoever" that the boy had any political motive.

On the second day of his trial the boy changed his plea to guilty to sending an explosive device through the post. The charges alleging that he intended to injure the Prime Minister or any other person were left on the court file. Sentence was adjourned for a month for reports and the boy was granted bail.

£80,000 crash award for boy

Stephen Elliott, aged 16, was awarded £80,000 agreed damages in the High Court in London yesterday after being injured in an accident involving his father's lorry, in which he was a passenger.

He had a leg amputated after the accident, at East Bergholt, Essex, in December 1979, and suffered multiple fractures and lacerations which left him scarred for life.

PC jailed

Nigel Edwards, aged 26, of Llys-y-wern, Sychdyn, near Mold a police constable, was sentenced to three months' jail when he appeared before Chester Crown Court yesterday charged with causing the death of a colleague, PC Ian Grant, by reckless driving in June. Edwards has since left police service.

Radiation check

Shells and seaweed gathered by children of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic School, Swinton, on an outing to the beach near the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant in Cumbria were checked yesterday for traces of radioactivity by scientists from British Nuclear Fuels Limited. All showed normal background radiation.

Paper closes

The Burnley Evening Star, which started in 1965, will cease publication today with the loss of 68 jobs. Circulation has fallen from more than 30,000 to 16,000.

Cot death clue discovered

By Clive Cookson

Researchers at Birmingham University may have discovered a cause for unexplained "cot deaths".

Preliminary evidence from Dr Stanley Salmons and Mr Dennis Gale of the university's department of anatomy indicate that the main muscle protein, myosin, has not matured properly in the diaphragms of babies that mysteriously stop breathing in their cots. The researchers are using antibodies, supplied by the Institut Pasteur in Paris, to analyse the protein in post mortem samples. The antibodies distinguish the immature form of myosin, with which the baby is born, from the adult form that should develop during the first months of life. According to the Birmingham hypothesis, the diaphragm, whose muscles control breathing, becomes susceptible to fatigue if the myosin does not mature fast enough. Then any additional stress, such as a cold, could make the diaphragm fail suddenly.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Death, based in London, has given Dr Salmons and Mr Gale a £21,500 grant to carry their research further over the next two years. Mr Gale emphasized that the project was intended only to identify an important molecular cause of cot-deaths.

If myosin immaturity is indeed implicated, then more clinical work would be required to develop the discovery into a practical means of identifying babies at risk, who could be monitored closely.



Eila Karjalainen: a Finnish student.

Blenheim body identified

The girl found strangled in a wood on the Duke of Marlborough's Blenheim estate in Oxfordshire three weeks ago has been named as a Finnish student, Eila Karjalainen, who was 23.

The breakthrough in identifying her body came this week when a walker found her passport, rucksack and diary in a lay-by near Witney.

Det Supt Roger Nicklin said that Miss Karjalainen arrived at Harwich on August 2. She stayed at a hotel in central London until the following Sunday, apparently intending to visit Wales the next week.

Stringfellows night club wins court chip fight

The owner of Stringfellows night club in London yesterday won his High Court battle to prevent a frozen-food producer selling chips under his name.

McCains can no longer use the brand name Stringfellows on their new long thin oven-ready chips, Mr Justice Whitford ruled.

But he suspended his order for 12 weeks to give time for "hundreds of tons" of bagged chips to be sold and an appeal to be considered.

Stringfellows club and restaurant in St Martin's Lane was described by the judge as one of the top three in London. During the week-long hearing it was said to be frequented by "beautiful people" and show-business personalities.

Mr Peter Stringfellow, from Marylebone, north London, and his company, Stringfellow Enterprises, brought the action against McCain Foods (GB) of Scarborough, and their advertising agents Reeves Roberts & Needham of Kensington, west London. The judge dismissed the claim against the advertising agents, ordered an inquiry into damages and awarded Mr Stringfellow his costs.

Afterwards Mr Stringfellow said that he would celebrate with "a champagne, caviar, but no chips" party.

The judge ruled that Stringfellows' reputation as a first-class night club and restaurant would be likely to decline rapidly if it became tainted.

No one suggested that McCains frozen chips are not perfectly wholesome or acceptable, but the association of the name with Mr Stringfellow was likely because of the undoubted possibility of confusion.

"An expensive, fashionable night club and frozen chipped potatoes seem to be miles apart," the judge said.

Mr Stringfellow claimed that the association of his night club with such a product as chips could damage his business. People thought he had gone into the frozen food business and was making a great deal of money from lending his name.

The judge said that this belief could have been brought about by the television advertisement shown in London and the south-east which emphasized the name Stringfellows "by a background of music and dancing in a suburban kitchen fitted with disco lights".

The company agreed not to proceed with its advertising campaign. Mr Stringfellow opened his club in 1980 at a cost of £1m.

Coroner halts heart transplant

By David Cross

When a suitable patient was found at Harefield Hospital in Uxbridge, west London, preparations were made for a helicopter to go to Staffordshire to pick up the heart. But the unit from Harefield was called back when Mr John Wain, the deputy coroner of Stoke-on-Trent, unexpectedly called a halt to the removal of Mr Alcock's heart.

In the only statement which he has issued since taking his decision Mr Wain said that he had stopped the operation because he considered that "the pre-existing condition of the deceased's heart might be relevant to the jury inquest in due course". Yesterday Mr Wain was not available for further clarification of his decision.

But Mrs Jean Alcock, the fitter's widow, of Goldhurst Drive, Tean, has said that she was upset that the dying wish of her husband had not been honoured. "It seems he died in vain," she added. Her mother-in-law, Mrs Dorothy Alcock, also criticized the coroner's decision. Many people with

organ donor cards could be dismayed that their wishes were not carried out," she said. "This has lost them hundreds of donor cards".

Mr Ray Alcock, the dead man's father, called for an inquiry into the coroner's decision. "It seems pointless to carry a donor card if the parents cannot carry out the wishes of their son," he said.

A spokesman for the Department of Health and Social Security in London said yesterday that she hoped that Mr Alcock's case would in no way deter people from offering their organs for transplants. The department was launching a poster, leaflet and television commercial campaign at the end of next month to relaunch the donor card system, she said.

A spokesman for Harefield Hospital said that he was disappointed that the transplant had not gone ahead as planned. But hospitals had to pay attention to what a coroner decided. "We cannot argue about it," he said.

Predator beetles imported to protect trees

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Three hundred Belgian beetles of the species *Rhizophagus grandis* have been imported by the Forestry Commission and established in a special breeding unit in Mortimer Forest, near Ludlow, Shropshire, eventually to attack the Great Spruce Bark Beetle (*Dendroctonus Micans*).

Unlike *R. grandis*, *D. Micans* prefers the bark of conifer trees, especially Sitka spruce, ultimately killing them. Since an infestation was discovered by the commission in August last year, numbers have spread.

There are now restrictions on the movement of timber in the Welsh border counties and in Gloucestershire, Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire and a part of Staffordshire.

Mr Nicholas Edwards, Secretary of State for Wales, told the Commons on Wednesday that 677 infestations had so far been discovered. A commission official said yesterday it was hoped to release about six thousand predators.

Loophole in prison repatriation Bill

By Stewart Tessler, Crime Reporter

Planned government legislation for the repatriation of Britons imprisoned abroad could result in some prisoners serving sentences in British jails for offences not recognized here.

The Repatriation of Prisoners Bill which has its second reading in the Lords next Wednesday follows the Government's announcement in August that Britain would ratify the Council of Europe Convention for sentenced persons.

The convention, due to be ratified by 14 countries, including Canada and the United States, says that prisoners can be sent home to serve their punishment only where their offence is recognized in both countries.

The Bill does not lay down that the offence must be mutual, going wider by not being specific. So, a prisoner could be returned from the Middle East to serve a sentence for possessing alcohol.

The National Council for the

Prices held by fresh turkeys

About nine thousand turkeys will have been killed and sent to butchers' shops this week from the farm of Mr Tom Copas, near Marlow, Buckinghamshire (our Agriculture Correspondent writes).

Altogether about 10 million birds will be consumed this Christmas, but four fifths of those will be frozen, 750,000 of them unsold from last year.

Although supermarkets are selling frozen turkeys at less than 50p a pound, the market for fresh birds at between £1 and £1.05 a pound is holding up well, according to Mr Copas.

Unlike Welsh farmers, who expressed fears recently that the glut of frozen birds would undermine their businesses, he is confident that there are still two million families prepared to pay twice the price for better flavour and texture.

"If anything, the trade is coming our way," he says.

Army team to test life at 40° below zero

By Rodney Cowton

A party of British servicemen are to spend a year living in tents and snowholes for a remote Antarctic island which is thought only to have been visited four times.

The party will leave Britain

for Brabant Island, more than 600 miles south of Tierra del Fuego later this month. It is almost entirely covered by snow and ice, and apart from facing temperatures of minus 40 degrees centigrade, the expedition will also have to

endure force 12 hurricane winds.

The expedition will rely on tents and snowholes for accommodation and will not have a base hut. The objective is to carry out research into survival in harsh conditions.

CROFT

It befell on a certain day that a fair damsel came into the court of King Arthur, mounted on a white palfrey. And she spoke to the knights assembled there, saying, "Who among you will take up arms, and set forth on the Quest for the Holy Grail?"

At once, the knights rose up, and summoned their squires and horses. All save one Sir Perivale.


"Comest thou not with us?" enquired his fellows.

"Not I," said Sir Perivale. "My quest is at an end, for I have found this Croft Particular. A light, crisp and exceeding drinkable sherry...for all your hazardous adventures and arduous journeyings, you'll not find its equal!"

At this, the knights returned to the Round Table. And, on trying this marvellous potion, agreed forthwith to forget the Holy Grail.

And they bade the fair damsel to do likewise and join them in a glass of Croft Particular.

"Yeah," said Sir Galahad, doing his Sir John of the Wain impression that always got a big laugh at Camelot parties. "Get off yer horse and drink yer sherry."



Finest Pale Amontillado Sherry
CROFT
PARTICULAR

SLIGHTLY LIGHTER. SLIGHTLY LESS TRADITIONAL.
TO BE ENJOYED SLIGHTLY MORE OFTEN.

Magistrates studying jail sentences for drink drivers after Essex lead

By Kenneth Gosling

Magistrates throughout the country will have in mind the possibility of imposing deterrent sentences when dealing with drink driving cases after this week's sentences on nine drivers in Great Essex.

The Bench at Grays sent one man, who had a drink-driving conviction, to prison for six months during hearings on Thursday. Of the others, all first offenders, four were ordered to be detained in police cells for four days, the rest for two days each.

Mr Geoffrey Norman, secretary of the Magistrates' Association, said: "I am sure it will have the effect intended. The prospect of loss of liberty will operate on people's minds, particularly in the Grays area."

Mailcoach of the twentieth century

By Michael Horsnell

Like fresh-faced ghosts, three passengers brave the winter chill outside the Pack Horse Hotel in Louth, on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, awaiting the postbus, just as their ancestors did two centuries before them.

The distinctive red and yellow 11-seat Daimler is a world away from the Royal Mail stage-coach which set off from the old coaching inn on the muddy road to London.

Abandoned cars 'time bombs'

By Clifford Webb, Motoring Correspondent

The growing number of cars abandoned on Britain's streets because of stricter MOT enforcement are potential "time bombs" which sooner or later will kill children using them as playthings, the Automobile Association said yesterday.

Horsewoman fined for smuggling dog

Magistrates at Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, fined a horsewoman £500 for smuggling a dog.

Miss Sheila Wilcox, the leading horsewoman, was fined £500 and ordered to pay Gloucestershire county council's £40 prosecution costs.

Job fight by social worker

A social worker was dismissed after he allowed one of his staff to have a love affair with a disabled woman.

Mr Richard Cole, for the defence, said that the dog had been innocently against rabies in January, before his client left for Germany.

Whitehall-police clash on drugs

The Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers may be heading for a collision over Whitehall criticism that chief constables are not responding strongly enough to Britain's increasing drug abuse problems.

Senior officials are understood to be extremely unhappy at the association's "lack lustre" reaction to a government policy statement this week by Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, on curbing drug abuse.

Halifax paper rebuked over Ripper victim

A complaint that a newspaper persisted in trying to question a surviving victim of the "Yorkshire Ripper" despite being asked not to do so was upheld by the Press Council yesterday.

The council agreed that, despite the newsworthiness of the distressing attack on Mrs Olive Smelt, of Boothtown, Halifax, it was wrong of the Evening Courier to persist in attempts to question her when it was clear that she did not want to be interviewed by its staff.

Mailcoach passengers

All aboard: Passengers of the Louth postbus (Photograph: John Manning).

known to carry the occasional sheep and pick up prescriptions for the doctor for some of their passengers, and the service is expanding south of the border.

Whitehall-police clash on drugs

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Reporter

with customs officers on various initiatives the problem, none the less, was one for society as a whole.

Sailing ships rot in Falklands grave

At least 500 wrecked British and American 19th century ocean-going sailing ships are rotting off the Falkland Islands because there is no preservation programme, the Falkland Islands Foundation says.

Its newsletter published this week described the ships as "the finest natural museum of nautical antiquity in the world".

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Israel denies offering safe conduct for evacuation of Arafat

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem

The Israeli Government yesterday stepped up its war of nerves against Mr Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organization leader, by flatly denying that it had given any guarantee of safe conduct to the Greek authorities for his proposed evacuation from Tripoli.

The denial, which followed reports of contacts between Israel and Greece over the plan, was made by a senior Government official at a briefing for foreign journalists. "Israel did not give any commitment to anyone about this," he said in answer to repeated questioning.

The briefing, which came hours after Israel's fourth naval bombardment of PLO positions around the north Lebanese port was apparently designed to maintain the high level of international apprehension surrounding the evacuation.

Asked if the central thrust of Israel's policy was to keep the world guessing, the official acknowledged candidly: "Maybe that is the name of the game."

Despite the denial of contacts, direct or indirect with the Greeks, it is still considered unlikely that Israel will launch any attack once Mr Arafat and his 4,000 men are on board their Greek vessels under escort from French and American

warships. But increased Israeli military action in Tripoli up until the final moment of embarkation is considered a firm possibility.

Yesterday, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, held private talks with Mr Donald Rumsfeld, President Reagan's special Middle East envoy, at which the subject of the evacuation is understood to have been discussed. Neither party would give any account of the meeting to the press.

Earlier, Mr Moshe Arens, the Defence Minister, played his part in the policy of attempting to prevent, or at least delay, the PLO guerrillas' departure by again expressing the hope that Western nations would not "assist the evacuation of the PLO with their weapons to other locations where they can continue their terror activities against Israel and non-Israeli targets."

The minister claimed that Israel was using diplomatic channels to try and persuade any nation preparing to assist in the evacuation to first get "a commitment from Arafat that he will lay down his arms and stop all terror activities."

Speaking after a memorial service for the 28 Israeli Druze Arabs so far killed in the Lebanon war, Mr Arens said on Thursday: "If we cannot con-

vince them to forbid Arafat and his terrorists to operate from anywhere else, we will have to consider the situation and decide what to do about it."

He then added ambiguously: "I hope we will not come to the point where we will be forced to open fire on the ships evacuating Arafat and the terrorists from Tripoli."

When asked directly whether Israel would, in fact, take such far-reaching action, Mr Arens declined to engage in what he described as "speculation."

Apart from the psychological gains from the climate of uncertainty, the Israelis are also determined on a rigid point of principle never to be seen giving public guarantee of safe passage to Mr Arafat, whatever the Government's real intentions towards the evacuation may be.



Yuletide: Lance-Corporal Sowers, of the US peace-keeping force in Lebanon, rescuing his Christmas tree from a tent hit by rocket fire.

West sees hope in Pretoria's Angola offer

From Zoriana Pysarski, New York

The South African proposal for disengagement of its forces in southern Angola has been met with surprise and scepticism by black African countries, which saw it as a ruse to gain Western sympathy. The West, however, thought it offered possibilities for settling the issue of Cuban troops in Angola.

In a letter to the United Nations on Thursday, Mr R. F. Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, said Pretoria was prepared to disengage its troops on condition that Angola provides assurances that it would not exploit the situation.

This meant that neither Angola's forces, nor Cuban troops protecting the MPLA regime, nor Swapo guerrillas operating from Angola with the aim of securing Namibia's independence, could make moves in the area. Although it was not spelled out, the offer sounded much like a proposal for a demilitarized zone.

The proposal in itself was not new, since it had been the subject of negotiations between South Africa and Angola which broke down earlier this year.

South African officials said the date set to begin disengagement, January 31, was negotiable and meant to give impetus to a resumption of talks.

The offer came as the Security Council met at Angola's request to consider South Africa's occupation of southern Angola. Africans saw it as a preemptive move to escape serious calls for sanctions and reduce Western Pressure for a Namibian settlement.

But the proposal fits in neatly with attempts by the five-member Western contact group to place the removal of South African forces from southern Angola within the context of Cuban withdrawal. Angola has rejected the idea of connecting a Namibian settlement with the departure of Cuban troops and, although the proposal is linkage by another name, it would seem to make it more palatable.

South Africa has said it will not give up Namibia unless it has an undertaking that the Cubans will leave. Although only the United States supports it in this position, many other countries are privately convinced that the two issues must go hand-in-hand if there is to be a Namibian solution.

The Angolan initiative in the Security Council is considered to be part of a domestic campaign aimed at rallying Angolans against the rebel Unita organization, which operates in the south with South African support and poses a threat to the stability of the government in Luanda.

While South Africa has never officially admitted that its forces are entrenched in southern Angola, Western analysts estimate that 2,000 to 3,000 troops are in the area.

No evidence Andropov is working again

Moscow (Reuters) - US and West European diplomats say they have no evidence that President Yuri Andropov is back at work after his forced month absence. They denied reports from Washington that western embassies in Moscow had already sighed him.

"A Politburo motorcycle has been seen driving regularly to and from the Kremlin but so far there is no evidence that Andropov is inside it", one diplomat said.

A senior Communist Party spokesman, Mr Leonid Zamiatin, said last week that the 69-year-old President was recovering from an illness and already working again. Speculation now is whether he will appear at a plenum of the party's Central Committee on December 26 or 27.

Cocaine haul in New York

New York (AP) - A record 1,600 lb of cocaine with an estimated street value of £110m was seized and three men arrested in what the authorities said was the largest drug seizure ever in the New York city area.

The cocaine, described as high-quality Colombian, was found in duffel bags and boxes when a combined federal, state and city drug task force arrested the three men late on Thursday in Queens Borough.

Minister quits

Santiago (Reuters) - Chile's Foreign Minister Senor Miguel Schweitzer, resigned after 10 months defending the record of President Augusto Pinochet's military government. Last week the UN General Assembly passed its annual censure vote on Chile's human rights record.

Envoy moved

Moscow (AP) - The Soviet Ambassador to Angola, Mr Vadim Loginov, has been "relieved of his duties and transferred to another post," Tass said. He is replaced by Mr Arnold Kalinin, ambassador to Portugal between 1974 and 1982.

Basque blasts

Las Bardenas (Reuters) - An officer and a soldier were slightly injured when two bombs planted by suspected guerrillas went off at a military shooting range near this northern Spanish town.

Ice breaker

Yamoussoukro (AP) - Ghanaians working in the Ivory Coast gave an airport welcome to Ghana's military leader Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings who arrived for talks with President Felix Houphouet-Boigny, their first bilateral contact. Until now both have regarded each other with open suspicion.

Killings in Indonesia 'should be over now'

From Our Correspondent, Jakarta

The spate of summary killings of alleged criminals which human rights groups claim have left up to 4,000 dead in Indonesia this year were supposed to have ended in August, Mr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, the Indonesian Foreign Minister said yesterday.

Mochtar, speaking at a press briefing, said: "The official position is that these things were not supposed to have occurred after the President's (National Day) speech in August when he said these measures have to be carried out within the dictates of the law."

The Foreign Minister said he had received notes from several foreign governments expressing concern over the killings, but said he had not yet seen a message from the International Commission on Human Rights which is also understood to have expressed concern over the killings.

The shootings of alleged criminals in main cities met with little opposition and considerable public approval when they started early this year. Newspapers carried front page photographs of bound and bullet-ridden bodies, many of them carrying the tattoos worn by ex-convict gangs.

Anger at 190 pc inflation

From Our Correspondent, Jerusalem

Israeli trade unionists yesterday launched a series of mass protest demonstrations directed at the Government's failure to solve the serious inflationary spiral now destined to produce an all-time record inflation rate between 190 and 200 per cent by the end of the year.

The three days of protest were prompted by the publication of official statistics showing that prices rose by 15.2 per cent during the single month of November, bringing to 40 per cent the erosion in wages registered over the past two months.

Despite the latest grim economic statistics, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the new Prime Minister, pledged publicly on Thursday that there would be no cutback in the costly programme of continuing to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The failure of his new Finance Minister, Mr Yigal Cohen-Orad, to exercise restraint on runaway inflation is posing a growing threat to the

Government's chance of winning the next election. All recent opinion polls have placed the ailing economy above the continuing involvement in Lebanon as the main cause of the Likud Government's declining popularity.

The new Finance Minister is now faced with the beginning of a workers' protest movement led by the Histadrut, the Israeli equivalent of the Trades Union Congress, aimed partly at his efforts to cut back the almost total index-linking of all inflationary price rises. The demonstrators are demanding an immediate payment of 17.9 per cent in the allowance given to every salaried employee in Israel to recompense them against the inflation rate.

A Treasury spokesman attempted to play down the severity of the latest price rises by claiming they had been expected. He blamed them squarely on the previous policies of Mr Yoram Aridor, who resigned ignominiously from the Finance Ministry in October

after details were leaked of his controversial scheme to switch the whole Israeli economy onto a US dollar basis.

But the claims did little to soften the effect of the latest price rises (including a 188 per cent increase in the cost of food products over the last 12 months) which, according to economic experts, means that the annual inflation rate for 1983 will be close to 200 per cent. This compares with recent government pledges that the rate of increase would soon be reduced, and inflation cut back to double figures.

During the past 11 months, prices in Israel have already risen by 160.5 per cent, ensuring that the annual figure will easily outstrip the previous record total of 132.9 per cent inflation reached in 1980 - also under a Likud government.

The new series of workers' demonstrations is just one of many pointers that the runaway rate of price increases is now beginning to threaten the whole social fabric of the country.

Police deter Solidarity protests

From Roger Boyes, Gdansk

A huge concentration of police in Gdansk and other Polish cities yesterday deterred Solidarity supporters from obeying the appeal of the underground opposition to stage large scale demonstrations and marches in town centres.

Riot police quickly dispersed a group of young Gdansk shipyard workers chanting "Solidarity, Solidarity" in front of the port's railway station. Hundreds of militia vehicles, including water cannon trucks, stood by in the streets of Wroclaw, Nowa Huta and Warsaw but at nightfall the situation was reported calm.

The main flashpoint was Gdansk. Here, in the birthplace of Solidarity, Mr Lech Walesa was due to deliver a speech setting out a programme for Solidarity supporters defining pressure points on the Government and areas in which the banned trade union should concentrate its activities.

But Mr Walesa, who is suffering from a high fever, did

not appear at the towering monument outside the Lenin shipyards which commemorate the striking workers who were shot on December 16, 1970. Instead, his wife Danuta - who also received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of her husband - made the 500-yard trek from St Brigid's Church to the Monument.

Several hundred riot police blocked off the approach roads and in a series of checkpoints sifted away the few hundred sympathizers who had followed her. In the end, only Mrs Walesa, a frail figure thickly coated against the sub-zero temperatures, and her secretary were allowed to lay a wreath.

"Speeches have to have audiences," Mr Walesa told reporters who telephoned his home, explaining why it was pointless to try and deliver his programme to a sea of blue uniforms. Shipyard workers leaving the yards after the end of the morning shift took in the row upon row of militia vehicles and their accompanying functionaries and avoided the monument, walking instead to the railway station.

Here several dozen, perhaps as many as 150, started to chant but were quickly stifled by the police, who blocked the trams, cordoned off one side of the street and yelled at passersby to get into their trains or stay indoors.

In Warsaw, around Constitution Square where workers were supposed, had they followed the instructions of the underground, to gather, the police parked militia vans and checked the documents of Christmas shoppers. Women were told to empty their bags and Christmas trees were unwrapped to prove that they did not contain weapons or leaflets.

Several hundred Solidarity sympathizers subsequently walked through one of the main thoroughfares of the capital, but they did not chant or brandish banners and the police left them alone.

East block attacks on peace activists

From Our Own Correspondent, Warsaw

The policy of stationing new Soviet nuclear missiles in Eastern Europe has been accompanied by an extensive security police campaign against independent peace activists. Arrests, raids on flats, the interrogation of relatives, warnings to employers: it all seems a long way from the relative calm and immunity of the Greenham Common protest.

This evoked rumblings among independent peace campaigners in Czechoslovakia, but without strong church protection, the movement has not thrived. Police have picked up anyone questioning the rationale of the Soviet deployment.

In Brno, police interrogated pupils from three schools after circulation of a petition opposing the missiles. Teachers were warned and reprimanded and one pupil, Petr Pospischal, was arrested when he travelled to Prague.

Earlier this year about 300 young people - officially described as drunken hooligans - made use of the government-sponsored Prague Peace Congress to stage a private peace demonstration. The sentiment behind it seemed to be a vague devotion to youth-cult figures - above all, John Lennon, the former Beatle - and their commitment to universal disarmament.

Although dissidents have had trouble recently in Hungary - above all, it has been difficult to maintain the flow of samizdat literature - the peace group known as Dialogue has continued to function. It does not attract the same interest as in East Germany, but it has been in the forefront of the debate about how far East European peace activists should separate the campaign for peace from the campaign for civil rights.

Poland's film-makers have virtually excluded Communist Party members from their governing board and have approved the idea of a special studio unit to produce films of interest to Roman Catholics.

The decisions showed that Poland's cultural associations - in the main banned or reorganized because of their political sympathy with Solidarity - still possess some independent life. Andrzej Wajda, Poland's leading director responsible for such films as *Man of Iron* and *Danton*, returned to Poland to address the congress of the film-makers this week, having been earlier persuaded to give up the presidency of the union.

"As a chairman, I have lost," he told the congress, "but this defeat could be turned into a victory if the association takes control of its own fate."

The film-makers responded well to his appeal. A Central Committee secretary, Mr Waldemar Swirgon, had earlier told the film-makers that it would be unwise to reelect Mr Wajda - whose support for Solidarity has always been strongly stated - that they should avoid political statements of support for the banned Writers' Union for example, and should have a large communist Party representation. Instead, only five members are in the party and they - including the vice-chairman, Mr Jerzy Hoffman and the president, Mr Jerzy Kawalerowicz - were chosen more for their acknowledged skill as film-makers rather than for their political status.

One young film director said that as the majority of Poles were believing Catholics, it was only appropriate that a production unit be set up to make films on church themes.

Party directors opposed this but the new chairman of the association, Mr Janusz Majewski, said that the proposal should be put to a vote and the suggestion was carried overwhelmingly.

Whether the Government will make funds available for such an idea seems doubtful however - it is difficult to imagine a project that would upset the hardline Marxists in Prague and Moscow.

The main hardliner at the congress, Mr Bohdan Poreba, criticised Mr Wajda and the presentation of a prize to him by young film-makers.

Polish film makers resist party rule

From Our Own Correspondent, Warsaw

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ANC man arrested in South Africa



Many a slip: Reaching for a woman customer's lighter, Sydney waiter Richard Daldini fell from the Harbourwatch Restaurant's balcony and was left hanging 50ft up

From Ray Kennedy, Johannesburg

Five whites and an alleged black African National Congress (ANC) guerrilla have been arrested in the Johannesburg area. Major-General Frans Steenkamp, the head of the South African Security Police, said the whites, including two women, were arrested as a result of investigations after the conviction of a white treasonist last month of Mr Carl Niehaus, aged 23, a high student, and his fiancée, Miss Jansie Lourens. They are being held incommunicado under the Internal Security Act.

General Steenkamp described the black guerrilla as a well-known and trained ANC terrorist and said arms, including Soviet-made limpet mines, had been seized. Last week, Security Police announced the arrest of two suspected ANC guerrillas after a shootout in the Coloured Johannesburg suburb of Eldorado Park.

Meanwhile, security was stepped up in Johannesburg yesterday after a bomb blast on Thursday evening in a city-centre office of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Seven blacks, women office cleaners, and watchmen were slightly injured in the explosion which occurred only a few minutes after the evening rush hour.

It was the third attack on government offices in Johannesburg - all carried out with limpet mines - this month.

Sea change: Signs apologetic for apartheid will be put up around whites-only children's paddling pools on the beach front at Durban, South Africa's main coastal resort.

Vatican attacks boxing as coma victim worsens

Milan (Reuters) - The Vatican newspaper yesterday questioned the morality of boxing, as the condition of an Italian fighter who collapsed last weekend deteriorated.

An editorial in the *Osservatore Romano*, citing the case of Salvatore La Serra, who is in a coma, said no sport or spectacle could be accepted by a civilized conscience if it put human life at stake.

Other sports, such as car racing and mountaineering, were arguably more dangerous,

Global abuse of journalists continues

By David Cross

The International Press Institute, the watchdog of press freedom, has issued more protests about abuses against journalists this year than at any time during its history.

Free speech is respected in only a small part of the globe, the institute says in its annual report published today. Highest on the list of protests is Turkey. Journalists and editors too numerous to mention have been sentenced to heavy fines or stiff jail terms, charged with offences which most people in the free world would not even consider crimes.

Most of Eastern Europe continues to jail journalists and writers, as does most of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. "Some do not even bother with the luxury of prisons: some prefer more direct measures like the bullet",

Newsmen and publishers have found that speaking the truth is not a guaranteed right of the individual, but something to be suppressed or distorted, the institute says. The signatories to the United Nations Charter on Human Rights or the Helsinki Agreement are breaking their word. "Today, only a small part of the globe can boast that free speech is respected and honoured. The rest of the world is gagged."

The institute also criticizes the free press for reporting too little about abuses against journalists. "Those governments who are the worst offenders are often guided by the reactions of the outside world," it says.

The report also singles out South Africa as a country where press freedom is under constant

The secret of great Methode Champenoise has always been kept in the dark.

Look for the black bottle and discover the secret of Spain's premier sparkling wine.

GORDON NEGRO

Mauroy intervenes in car dispute as recession bites deeper in France

From Diana Geddes, Paris

The recession, which came later to France than to most other industrialized countries, is finally beginning to pinch, causing unions and management to harden their positions and the Government to quake.

The announcement on Thursday by the car manufacturer Peugeot-Talbot that it is to close indefinitely from Monday its factory at Poissy, outside Paris, where workers have been on strike for the past week in protest against redundancy plans, is almost certainly a sign of worse to come on the industrial front.

France's largest privately-owned car manufacturer which is expected to lose 2 billion francs (£170m) this year, took the decision to lay-off its 17,000 workers at Poissy in an attempt to force the Government to accept its proposals for nearly 3,000 compulsory redundancies at the factory. The redundancies are part of an overall slimming plan for the company involving the loss of nearly 10 per cent of its 18,000 workforce.

It is a sign of the gravity with which the Government is treating the dispute that M. Pierre Mauroy, the Prime Minister, has himself decided to take the matter in hand. Emergency meetings were taking place between the Peugeot management and the Government yesterday.

The long-brewing crisis in the car industry could not have come to a head at a worse time for the Government. Within the last week it has been severely attacked for the alleged inequalities of its industrial policy by two groups from which it might have expected more

support - the Socialist CFDT union, and the Communist Party, which only a fortnight ago signed a new agreement with the Socialists pledging greater loyalty to the Government.

Describing the Government's industrial policy as "secretly inflexible and incoherent," M. Edmond Maire, the moderate general-secretary of the CFDT, accused the Government of following up its "magnificent promises" with silence. "They say nothing, they announce no plans, no schemes, no figures. They keep the unions in complete ignorance."

The Government was spending huge sums amounting to 52 billion francs (£4,300m) this year to try to stop the industrial decline, but nothing was being done to prepare for the future, he complained. He feared that the Government's "march into the dark" would lead workers "to despair and revolt."

The CFDT's cry of alarm is not totally devoid of self-interest, however. The union has been much criticized for being a "toady" of the Government, and at the social security elections last October, it saw itself drop from its traditional number two position to number three. It has lost 15 per cent of its membership over the past year.

It was also important for the CFDT that the Communists and the Communist-led CGT union should not be seen to be the only defenders of workers' jobs which are now being lost in the industrial sector at a rate of 30,000 a month, twice the rate at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, lay-offs are ex-

pected soon in coal, steel, construction, engineering, chemicals and textile industries.

A few days earlier, M. Georges Marchais, the Communist Party leader, wrote to M. Laurent Fabius, the Industry Minister, saying that it was "high time" that the Government followed its words by actions, and showed "greater rigour in keeping its promises in the crucial field of industry."

As M. Fabius was away, it was M. Max Gallo, the official Government spokesman, who launched the counter-attack. "To believe and to make others believe that you can always prevent redundancies, keep non-profitable businesses going, and accept ever greater losses, is to render a disservice to the workers, firms and the country, and disarm France in the tough field of international competition," he insisted.

The Government reluctance to help firms which has also been referred to recently by M. Jacques Delors, the Finance Minister. "Some enterprises are declining, others are being born. The longer you keep the former in an oxygen tent, the more it will cost the taxpayer, and the less money there will be for new projects. And at the end of the day, instead of having 100 unemployed, you will have 200 unemployed," he said.

Figures announced yesterday show that the number of unemployed rose by 3 per cent last month, having been kept stable at around 2 million or just under 9 per cent of the workforce for more than a year.

The Government continues to insist that it will take what measures are necessary to prevent unemployment rising



President Mitterrand of France talking in Belgrade yesterday with Mr Dragomir Tulumirovic, aged 90, a veteran of the First World War, holding his unit's regimental flag. The French President placed flowers at a monument commemorating French assistance to Serbia during the First World War.

Plea to UN over activist's trial

The unofficial Soviet peace organization has appealed to Secretary-General and to Western peace movements to prevent the impending trial of Mrs Olga Medvedkova, one of the group's founding members.

An appeal yesterday by the Group for the Establishment of Trust between the USA and the USSR said Mrs Medvedkova and four other unofficial activists had been arrested by police in October during the trial of Mr Oleg Radzinsky, a fellow member.

The peace campaigners were manhandled and detained in a derelict building by plainclothes policemen who refused to identify themselves.

The five were later released, but last week Mrs Medvedkova was charged with assaulting a police officer and ordered not to leave Moscow. She is to appear at the Moscow prosecutor's office on Monday.

Members of the group said they feared the authorities would arrange an unusually swift trial and sentence. Mrs Medvedkova, aged 34, a geographer and wife of the group's founder, Dr Yuri Medvedkov, is likely to be sentenced to three years' hard labour under the penal code.

Mrs Medvedkova said the four other activists had testified that she had at no time engaged in violence and that the peace group's policy was one of passive resistance. The group says it avoids both criticism of Soviet state policy and direct clashes with the authorities, but has been systematically persecuted since it was founded in June last year.

Dr Medvedkov said the decision to try his wife was part of a KGB secret police campaign to "pick off" the group's steering committee, one by one. The committee maintains strong links with Western peace movements and was visited by

Seaga storms to pyrrhic victory

By Jeremy Taylor

Jamaica faces the prospect of five years with a one-party Parliament. Having thrashed independent and fringe candidates in a mere six constituencies in Thursday's elections Mr Edward Seaga, the Prime Minister and the ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) now control all 60 seats in the House of Representatives. The other 54 seats were won uncontested.

Mr Michael Manley's Peoples' National Party (PNP) refused to contest them in protest at Mr Seaga's failure to honour a 1980 agreement on electoral reform.

Mr Seaga had called a election two years early citing a crisis of confidence after the PNP had called for his resignation as Finance Minister. His personal popularity had increased after he helped to engineer the American-led invasion of Grenada six weeks ago and the affairs had also distracted attention from the Government's failure to produce the economic recovery it promised. Mr Seaga's gamble has now bought the JLP another five years.

However, the Opposition boycott leaves a large question mark over the election result. Mr Manley, who argues that the three-year-old voting list disenfranchises 15 per cent of the electorate and contains 100,000 names of people who have died or migrated, knows that Mr Seaga has a very difficult task ahead in producing economic recovery and in the implementation of the agreed electoral reforms followed by fresh elections.

Jamaica's economy is still far from the "deliverance" that Mr Seaga promised when he swept to power in 1980. His managed to negotiate a large support programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) borrow more than \$1,000m (£714m), produce the first positive economic growth in nearly a decade and revive tourism.

But Jamaica has been unable to earn the hard currency it needs. A weak market for its main commodity, bauxite, together with rock bottom sugar prices and heavy debt servicing - \$530m this year - have robbed the island of precious foreign exchange.

Unemployment is steady at around 26 per cent. Inflation is increasing sharply after being brought below 5 per cent and last summer factories were working at an average of only 49 per cent of capacity.

A series of experiments with multiple exchange rates and a parallel currency market failed to bring in the expected flow of foreign exchange and at the end of September Jamaica failed for the second time this year to meet the quarterly performance test of the IMF, severely embarrassing Mr Seaga, causing a 43 per cent devaluation and leading directly to premature elections.

A new 15 months standby credit with the IMF is being completed.

Mr Seaga promises that the lack of Parliamentary opposition will not result in a "corrupt or insensitive Government". But the election result could lead to increasing political tension or a resurgence of political violence.

Argentina to find out why 7,000 disappeared

From Douglas Tweedale

President Raul Alfonsín has appointed a commission to investigate the disappearance of more than 7,000 people who vanished during the Argentine military campaign against urban terrorism in the 1970s.

The 16-member commission, which includes journalists, authors, churchmen and scientists known for their concern about human rights violations will have access to military and Government records in order to determine what happened to the missing persons.

The commission will have no power to try those responsible for the murders, but has been instructed to submit all evidence of possible crimes to the courts. It is to produce a report on its findings in six months' time.

Argentine human rights groups have documented the disappearance of more than 7,000 people who are believed to have been kidnapped and killed by Government security forces during what the military has called its "dirty war" against left-wing subversion from 1976 to 1981.

But relatives of disappeared people and human rights activists believe the figure of missing people is closer to 30,000, due to the many incompletely documented cases and instances of disappeared persons whose families did not report them as missing out of fear.

Meanwhile, former President Isabel Peron, who was overthrown by the 1976 military coup, prepared to leave Argentina after a one-week visit during which she met President Alfonsín and began what is expected to be a thorough purge of the Peronist party which she formally heads.

Senora Peron was flying back to Madrid for what she promised would be a brief stay before returning to take full charge of the movement she inherited from President Juan Peron.

Iran's war fever fuels Iraqi panic

By Richard Dowden

As the Gulf war grinds through its fourth year, the Iraqis are seeking peace at almost any price short of capitulation but Iran's internal politics dictate that it must continue until the Baghdad Government falls.

The war is going well for Iran. It can sustain a steady pressure on Iraq, draining its resources and forcing it to be dependent on the Gulf States. Meanwhile the heavy casualties - some estimates say Iran has lost nearly a quarter of a million dead - help to maintain the revolutionary fervour and concentrate the minds of the people on an external enemy. The Khomeini regime has invested too much in the war to end it with anything less than the fall of President Saddam Husain of Iraq.

It is sometimes suggested that the return of the Iranian Army from the front would create problems for the regime, but the troops have been purged and indoctrinated and the political capital accrued from the defeat of Iraq could keep the regime going for years.

The war channels the energies of the militant youth. One Revolutionary Guard told me: "When we have rid Iraq of Baathism, we shall liberate Lebanon and Palestine."

While the tactics of the Pasdaran, the Revolutionary Guards, are similar to Hitler's Brown Shirts or Mao's Red Guards, their fervour mingled with leftist fury gives them a self righteousness and the conviction of having God on their side. "Our revolution is to change people not just structures," one told me. "I have a duty to protect you from harming yourself by failing to obey the law of God just as I have a duty to stop you jumping off that building."

Supplied with fleets of new white Nissan Jeep-style vehicles they force their way through the Tehran traffic with an arrogant disregard for the laws of civil police. Their uniforms are dull coloured clothes, anorak or jacket, open-neck shirt and at least three days growth of beard. Some of them have bulges under their jackets. They pursue sin as vigilantly as political opposition and are as likely to

be seen stopping a woman for not having a proper veil as leading the crowds in chanting slogans against their enemies.

The question in many people's minds is whether they can be controlled or whether they and their leader, Mohsen Rezaei, will become an independent force.

It is the Pasdaran who have effectively made Khomeini the undisputed ruler of Iran. They have crushed the Mujahadeen, the Islamic leftist opposition, and recently they attacked the offices of the Freedom Party, the only surviving secular party in the Majlis (parliament).

Although there is great discontent in Iran over the war, the shortages and the imposition of Islamic law, there is no organisation able to harness it into political opposition. Only the Grand Ayatollahs present any resistance to their fellow cleric but since their main objection to Khomeini is that the Ulama (clergy) should not be involved in politics they cannot take their opposition further without undermining their own position.

The question every observer asks is what will happen when Khomeini dies. Although he is apparently removed from the structures of government, all power passes through his hands and his word is law. But he represents more than political leadership and his power will not die with him. If they grab his mantle his successors will be able to rule in his name for some time. Provision has been made for the election of one, three or five successors but it seems likely that Hojjatolislam Akbar Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the Majlis, will assume the reins of government and Ali Hussein Montazeri the only Grand Ayatollah who totally supports Khomeini, (he is also his son-in-law) will assume a figurehead role. These two politicians have been making moderate statements over the past year trying to reassure the professional and commercial classes.

But there is little evidence that the Ayatollah is near to dying. He is 81 but is said to be in good health and has a brother aged 96. He and the Gulf war could be with us for some time.

UN move threatens Antarctic Treaty

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

A United Nations study on the status of Antarctica and the exploitation of its resources has been requested by the General Assembly in a move that could jeopardize the meticulously constructed Antarctic Treaty and pave the way for universal decision-making in the region.

Any attempts to unravel or tamper with the treaty which sets aside conflicting claims to sovereignty over the continent and contains vital disarmament provisions, are expected to encounter stiff resistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. The treaty is one of those rare instances in which the two super powers find themselves in agreement.

The treaty has been in existence for 24 years without attracting much notice, comprising an alliance of 14 initial consultative parties.

The report provides a period of grace for the treaty's 16 consultative parties who joined in the consensus resolution calling for the report rather reluctantly. Faced with an immediate confrontation, they chose the lesser of two evils, but the issue will undoubtedly become an emotive one in a year's time. Delegates recalled that the genesis of the now concluded Law of the Sea treaty was a seemingly innocuous statement by Malta calling for the sharing of the sea's wealth.

This time Malaysia, which explored ways to make its international mark, came up with the idea of launching an international debate on Antarctica, a clarion call which was quickly echoed by a majority of the UN's membership who do not like the treaty's "gentlemen's club".

Señor Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General, has been given a year in which to prepare the report. He will have to tread a fine line between the signatories of the treaty and the rest of the world's nations which would like to see Antarctica declared the common heritage of mankind, and make its largely untapped resources available to all.

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Poll shows Mondale is Democrats' choice

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

The approach of Christmas brings good news for Mr Walter Mondale but disappointment for Senator John Glenn. According to a poll carried out by the Washington Post/ABC News, the former Vice-President is continuing to poll ahead of Senator Glenn and six other Democrats seeking the 1984 Presidential nomination.

Mr Mondale's support among registered Democrats is now equal to that of all the other candidates combined. The poll showed that Mr Mondale is the choice of 49 per cent of registered Democrats, compared with 23 per cent for Senator Glenn, 10 per cent for the Rev Jesse Jackson and 8 per cent for Mr George McGovern.

One of the poll's most significant findings is that Mr Mondale is running stronger against President Reagan than Senator Glenn. Mr Mondale and Mr Reagan are now neck-and-neck among registered voters.

The poll also shows that Mr Mondale's support is highest where it counts most if he is to gain the Democratic nomination next year - among those most likely to vote in Presidential primaries which are scheduled to get under way in February.

A separate poll carried out by the Louis Harris Organization has indicated that President Reagan's overall approval rating has begun to slip after rising sharply following the Grenada invasion.

Author who accused paper jailed

From Mario Modiano, Athens

The author of a book accusing the top-selling Athens daily *Ethnos* (The Nation), a leftist tabloid of being an instrument of disinformation of the KGB, the Soviet intelligence service, was sentenced by an Athens court to two years' imprisonment.

Mr Paul Anastasiadis, a Cypriot journalist working in Athens as a correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The New York Times* was found guilty on two counts of libel. He was set free pending appeal.

His book, *Take The Nation In Your Hands* (the paper's main advertising slogan) was banned by the court, but after the appeal was lodged, the order was rescinded.

Mr George Bobolias, publisher of *Ethnos*, who has business links with the Soviet Union, and the paper's editor, Mr Aleksis Filippopoulos, were awarded damages of £110 each.

The court's verdict rejected the defendant's case that his book offered conclusive evidence that *Ethnos* had been published in cooperation with the KGB's disinformation department to influence Greek public opinion in favour of Soviet policies.

Coup officer swindled orphan fund

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Antonio Tejero, who held the Spanish Parliament at gunpoint during the 1981 coup attempt, has been accused of investing for his own gain, money which he had promised would go to the orphans of "victims of terrorism".

Tejero, a former Civil Guard lieutenant-colonel, is serving a 30-year sentence for military rebellion. He gave the promise about the money after *El Alcazar*, the extreme right-wing Madrid daily, collected more than 18m pesetas (£80,000) from an appeal it launched to help him to pay the fines the court martial also imposed.

The accusation against Tejero is one of the conclusions of an all-party committee set up by Andalusia's regional parliament to investigate the collapse last year of the Rural Savings Bank of Jaen, which is the centre of Spain's olive oil industry.

The committee, after a one-year investigation, found that Tejero invested the money transferred to him by the newspaper and was subsequently helped to withdraw it, with the interest, by executives of the bank just before it was saved by government intervention. Other investors were not so lucky and lost money.

Denmark faces election on January 10

From Christopher Follett, Copenhagen

A general election was called late on Thursday night in Denmark for January 10 following the failure of the 15-month-old Conservative-Liberal minority coalition Government to secure a parliamentary majority for its 1984 budget.

The Finance Bill, the hub of the austerity policies of the four-party Government of Mr Povl Schluter, Denmark's first Conservative Prime Minister since 1901, was rejected by 93 votes to 77 in the Folketing (Parliament) after a grueling 12-hour debate.

The Bill contained drastic public expenditure cuts affecting social services and sickness and unemployment benefits designed to reduce Denmark's state budget deficit from this year's 62,000m kroner (£4,400m) to around 58,000m kroner (£4,084m), the first drop in the country's budget deficit in a decade.

Mr Schluter said that he was asking the electorate for an improved mandate to continue his Administration's policies of economic revival. The Social Democrats, the largest opposition grouping, voted against the budget for the first time since 1929 along with two leftist parties when the anti-tax Progress Party of Mr Mogens Glistrup, the tax lawyer curbing serving a three-year prison sentence for gross tax fraud, refused to support the Government after insisting unsuccessfully on further cuts in public spending.

Only the small centrist Radical Party supported the coalition in the vote. The defeat of the Government on its economic policy followed a recent series of humiliating parliamentary rebuffs on foreign policy issues, notably NATO missile deployment policy which Mr Schluter has been found unwillingly to oppose by the opposition.

Recent opinion polls predict a landslide victory for Conservatives who stand to almost double their present 26 seats in Parliament at the cost, however, of their coalition partners. This makes it extremely doubtful whether Mr Schluter will be able to form a majority Administration after re-election.

Only two out of Denmark's political parties will run in the elections. There are only nine in the current 179-seat parliament. The last Danish general election was in December 1981.

Why Britain's rebate was blocked

From Our Own Correspondent, Brussels

An intense power struggle is under way between the three main institutions of the EEC to decide who actually rules in the Community. As a result, Britain, this week saw an agreed budget rebate blocked by the Parliament, while the whole Community is teetering on the brink of a destructive cash crisis.

The power struggle derives from the fact that the 14-member Commission has been unable to prevent the Council settling into the driving seat of all the Community processes. At the same time, the Parliament, anxious to make a name for itself before next June's direct elections, is jostling for attention.

The Council can claim the right to be top dog for one reason - it pays. All the money to run the Community has to come from the different member states, whose representatives sit as the Council when they meet. They may not always agree. Indeed, in recent months, they have been able to agree on distressingly few things. But they all recognize that they must collectively retain control over the purse strings.

With the failure of the Athens summit to accept reforms essential if the Community is to continue and develop, the Commission has begun a late bid to seize back the initiative. And, in doing so, it is relying heavily on the support of the Parliament, which is also resentful of the Council's power.

The day after the summit ended, the Commission produced a declaration and announced a new strategy - or rather announced its intention of returning to the old strategy. In future it will return to the original rule book laid out in the Treaty of Rome. That said, in essence, that the Commission proposes and the Council disposes.

Mr Gaston Thorn, the Commission President, spelt this out clearly before the Parliament last Tuesday. In future, he said, the Council would not be allowed to make its own proposals it would have to confine itself to amending Commission proposals. The Commission would stick firmly to its ideas.

Mr Thorn described the chaotic way the preparations for Athens had led inevitably to

failure. With too many countries making too many proposals, the inevitable happened.

Parliament applauded him. Like Mr Thorn, it has been resentful of the way the Council has been usurping its rights. It took the council to court for failing to agree to a transport policy in line with the treaty obligations. With the failure of Athens, it believes that it too can steal the limelight as the responsible European institution and can thus attract popular support in the June elections.

The vote to freeze the British rebate was not revenge on Britain for the failure of the summit. It was taken because this gesture was the only one it could legally make - and there remains doubt as to its legality - to protest at the Athens failure.

With the Community so short of money, the Council is much more anxious to reassert itself. France, perhaps more than any other country, is particularly keen to restrict Parliament's role.

This was behind French ideas before the Athens summit to fix strict limits to Community spending. The system it proposed would have reduced Parliament's authority in the budget process to virtually nothing.

There is no great belief in the Council that the Commission has the leadership or initiative to win more power.

In the words of one diplomat: "These boys don't have the guts to do anything but moan."

Children ask Santa to send us peace

Himmelpforten (AP) - The letters to "Dear Santa" are again pouring into this West German town with a heavenly name - it means "Heaven's Gates" - but this year their theme is different.

Instead of pleading for sledges or toys, the children are asking Santa to stop the nuclear arms race and bring peace to the world.

The self-appointed Santa, Herr Wilhelm Pilarski, a 70-year-old retired village manager, who tries to answer all the 15,000 letters he receives annually, said: "They are asking for a peaceful world, for the dismantling of weapons. That's the big theme."

Others are worried about hunger. An three-year-old boy named Christian, from Nuremberg, asked him to take cakes and chocolate to African children. Two little girls from Oldenburg, Stephanie and Daniela, wanted nothing for Christmas because they knew children in other countries were hungry.

"Many children write about jobless parents and family problems, such as grumpy fathers and overbearing older brothers", Herr Pilarski said. "Many of the letters are quite sad."

One boy, Torsten, wrote to say his mother wants a one-year separation from his father. "Please give me something to help me understand this," the boy wrote.

The letter-writing tradition started in 1962, when a German journalist reported about a six-year-old girl who had written to Santa at Himmelpforten, and received a reply, penned by a local postman. After that the letters poured in.

At first the postmen answered them all but when Herr Pilarski retired 10 years ago he became a full-time Santa. He and his wife Margarethe answer every letter, sometimes with the help of the neighbours. The cost of the operation is shared by the post office and the village.

Japanese conservatives head for victory despite vague poll predictions

From Richard Hanson, Tokyo

Pollsters remained remarkably vague over just how well Japan's ruling Conservative Liberal Democrats (CDD) will perform when voters go to the polls in Sunday's general election, the first in three and a half years, as candidates took advantage of the last few hours of an indecisive 15-day campaign.

What is virtually certain is that Japan will wake up on Monday to find the conservatives still in charge. Opposition parties are expected to face mixed results, with the biggest the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), battling uphill Japan, therefore, will continue to pursue the increasingly outward-looking and nationalistic policies being shaped by Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the Prime Minister.

about 270 seats in the 511-member Lower House allowing control of most important committees. This compares with 286 LDP seats when Mr Nakasone called the election to end more than a month of parliamentary deadlock which followed the Oct 12 conviction of Mr Kakuei Tanaka, the former Prime Minister, on bribery charges in the Lockheed trial.

US accepts Australian nuclear arms curb

From Tony Dubouat, Melbourne

Canberra believes the United States has accepted its offer that nuclear-armed warships will be allowed to use Australian dry docks only in emergencies. But talks with Britain have not been so fruitful.

Mr Bob Hawke, the Prime Minister, said on Thursday that, after telephone discussions between Mr Gordon Scholes, the Defence Minister and his British and US counterparts, differences with Washington had been resolved.

However, talks between Canberra and London had not been so successful after the dispute over the ban on the British aircraft carrier *Invincible* using the ravy dry-dock at Garden Island, in Sydney Harbour. *Invincible* now seems certain to go to Singapore for repairs. The ship is scheduled to spend Christmas in Australia.

"I would think in respect of the United States the matter is resolved," they understand and there will be no problems there. There is a bit more discussion going on with the United Kingdom. This matter will be resolved in a way which is totally satisfactory to our allies and to us, without any change in principle.

"These lurid suggestions that our alliances in some way or another are threatened are just hogwash."

Mr Scholes said he had initiated the talks with Mr Heseltine, the British Defence Secretary and Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, to discuss "the means by which the existing guidelines on visits by allied naval vessels can be developed to take account of special requirements for dry-docking."

The talks were preliminary and would be followed by others between officials from the three countries.

On Thursday Mr Scholes visited the *Invincible* and lunched with her captain and the British High Commissioner, Mr John Mason. Afterwards, Mr Scholes blamed the media and the federal opposition for the problems over the issue of docking nuclear-armed vessels.

On Wednesday soldiers and police arrested 300 members, including all the leaders, of the local left-wing Coalition of Workers, Peasants and Students (COCEI).

Bishops from three states in southern Mexico have condemned the Government-in-

India's cars to lose their 1950s look

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

The look of India's roads is about to suffer a drastic change. "It is a revolution," exclaimed one of the senior civil servants who is masterminding it.

At present the cars on streets here look as though they might have popped out of a film made in the 1950s. If you remember the Morris Oxford of that era you have the image of the Ambassador, the most popular transport in the country; indeed the only car made here that comes near to taking comfortably the full weight of an Indian family.

Remember the old Fiat 124? That is the other principal car on the road. A small car, seriously underpowered all the same, which looks a trifle more dashing than the heavy, round-shouldered Ambassador.

The only other Indian car is now out of production, but there are still a number of them around. They are based on the sharp-looking Triumph Vitesse of the latter 1950s.

Foreign cars are not much seen. When they are they belong either to diplomats or to pop stars. The cost of import tax is horrendous.

But this week a new generation of cars began to appear. On the birthday of her late son Sanjay, Mrs Indira Gandhi, formally inaugurated the assembly line of a new car, planned by Sanjay as a people's car. It is produced by a Government-owned factory specially built just outside Delhi and is called the Maruti - named after the goddess of the winds.

The building of the factory, like everything concerned with Sanjay Gandhi was controversial. People complained that their land was taken from them at unfairly low prices for the factory. Sanjay Gandhi was a personal friend of Mr Bansi Lal, the Chief Minister of Haryana, where the Maruti factory lies.

Commentators have been sniping at the project ever since, but at last the first cars have appeared, and the sniping has turned against the waiting list of people who want to have one. The first year's production is already well oversubscribed, and cars are to be sold on a lottery basis.

The car is fundamentally a small Suzuki, and is being manufactured in cooperation with the Japanese. It has disc brakes, front wheel drive, a modern wedge shape and a petrol consumption which is half that of the "gas-guzzlers" at present on the road.

Though not officially announced, both the other major car manufacturers hope to be able to launch new fuel-efficient models shortly. Hindustan Motors, the manufacturer of the Ambassador, are expecting to produce a vehicle with engine and transmission by the Japanese firm Inuzua, and a body like the Vauxhall produced by General Motors in England.

Premier Motors in Bombay, who produce the Fiat, are also in talks with foreign manufacturers to produce a new version. Even Standard Motors in Madras, who used to produce the Triumph-based model, still have a motor car production licence and may be tempted into the field by the lifting of price control which has accompanied the new policy.

The civil servants and their political masters certainly hope so. It is claimed by the car manufacturers that they were inhibited from modernizing their model lines by stringent price control in the past.

The Government would like to see what happened in the tractor industry repeated with the cars. There more than 10 firms entered the market when price control was lifted. The intense competition created its own price controls, but at a realistic level.



Revolution ahead: The present 1950s-style look of traffic

Mexico's democratic tyranny

By John Carlin

President Miguel de la Madrid has said on several occasions that he will not stoop to repression to preserve his ruling party's traditional stranglehold on Mexican political life. But this week hundreds of soldiers allegedly used guns, clubs and tear-gas to quell protests by members of a left-wing party in the impoverished Mexican south.

Despite heavy government restrictions on press coverage, reports have surfaced of many injuries after thousands of men and women in Juchitán, in the state of Oaxaca, fought troops on Tuesday over possession of the town hall, a potent symbol for Mexicans of political authority.

On Wednesday soldiers and police arrested 300 members, including all the leaders, of the local left-wing Coalition of Workers, Peasants and Students (COCEI).



President de la Madrid: Empty promises?

hall, which they had held since winning elections in March, 1981.

Gun-toting PRI henchmen have a history of terrorizing COCEI sympathizers in Juchitán.

President de la Madrid came to power a year ago with expansive claims that he would "morally renovate" traditionally corrupt Mexican politics. But after "clean" elections in July yielded triumphs for the opposition unprecedented during 50 years of uninterrupted PRI rule, the PRI has been winning elections in other states by its usual, astonishingly ample margins.

Past experience in Mexico has indicated that, whenever its massive political authority is under threat, the PRI's lurking capacity for violence and fraud will tend to rise to the surface. Mexican human rights groups claim that more than 600 people have "disappeared" for political reasons in Mexico in the last 10 years.

THE ARTS

Theatre



Susan Fleetwood as Prince Charming: Skillful note of ardour

Tradition served up limp

Cinderella Lyttleton

Much as the nation may hunger and thirst for a return to traditional Christmas pantomime, the National Theatre has gone beyond the call of duty with this limp museum piece.

The work of Bill Bryden, Trevor Ray and the company, it is a *laurel and yew* exercise, requiring the audience to respond to the story as if they had never heard it before. The style is directly opposite to that of the Players' Theatre's Victorian burlesques.

And although there is a safety curtain decorated with faded advertisements for Ellman's Embrocation and Bull Dog Bottled Beers, it relates to no particular period.

The idea is to conjure up a timeless romance, drawing on the old routines and painted scenic effects of a vanished age, and leave the story to do its work. Resorting to the most destructive word in my vocabulary, I can only describe the result as "tasteful".

On the design side, there is a glaring disparity between the sets and costumes. William Dudley's droplets and wing pieces take you from a wintry opening to a sunny finale by way of an elaborate sequence of

delicately muted interiors and palatial prospects. Against them, Deirdre Clancy dresses the company in bright metallic tights and harsh primary colours. The intention seems to be to draw maximum attention to the artificiality of the spectacle; asking spectators simultaneously to take the story straight and to view it as if between quotation marks.

The same thing applies to the dialogue, most of which consists of excruciating panto couplets, full of badly scanned lines and tortuous inversions, none of which is ever played for a laugh. You can admire the skill with which Susan Fleetwood's gleaming voluptuous Prince manages to extract a note of heartfelt ardour from the tongue-twisting banalities she has to get through; but more striking is the sheer perversity of the operation.

How, one wonders, can an acting company of this quality have cooked up such rotten parts for themselves. I had hopes of Marsha Hunt's transformed Dandini ("Charmin's name, Ruling's my game"), but the part soon fades out into a smirking side-kick. Trevor Ray, as the Baron, is credited with no characteristics whatever apart from a habit of turning up as a Scout Master, a Red Indian, and other rig-outs.

Joseph's schemings less for their cynical selfishness than for polished comedy, uttering his pious maxims in a wisecracker's voice belying his youthful looks.

Some touches have lost sharpness, notably the exquisitely comic auction scene, with Charles idly holding the crucial Sir Oliver portrait in his free hand while the old gent, unrecognized, fascinatedly awaits its fate. But Michael Sibery's Charles, a wastrel who like Lord Rochester is never quite sober, and Michael Denison's ripe Sir Oliver happily reappear, along with Dulcie Gray's drily detached Lady Sneerwell and Gordon Gostelow's lovingly uncaricatured Moses.

Nicola Pagett, the new Lady Teazle, has an abrasiveness and sparkle more a chastened *amoureuse* than a dizzy butterfly poignantly coming to her moral senses. Clive Francis, another newcomer, mines

As for the Uglics, a nutcracker-jawed Derek Newark and Robert Stephens snaking on like a pensioned-off geisha, take comic make-up to the limit, but otherwise occupy an aridly undercharacterized zone of spotted bloomer jokes and groan puns.

Meanwhile, a sizable pit orchestra confines itself mainly to supplying piano and violin accompaniments for parlour song-book items and pumping out Paderewski's minner for the *bal masque*.

There are more rousing numbers, but even then Mr Bryden's stage looks underpopulated - as, in the sight of the Prince dancing with Janet Dibley's colourless Cinders surrounded by an inert half-circle of guests.

The pace of the production is leisurely, even in the routines of Jack Shepherd and John Tams, as the brokers' men who come on saying "We are the brokers' men". The only figures to benefit from this are the reluctant Demon (James Grant) whom Mr Bryden has boldly imported from the Glasgow Empire; and the wordless decorators, whose duel with the brushes and paste earns its laughs from the extreme of relaxed slow-motion.

Irving Wardle

Radio

Strong ideas at a quiet pitch

"I wouldn't want them to be too cautious, but I would want them to be sensible." Thus, in our 1983 Reith Lecture, Sir Douglas has explained his rather lowly threshold. Yet the words "This could all be a lot better", spoken rather soft or set in 10-point type, may well refer to exactly the same set of circumstances as "Lecturer slams inefficiency", either shouted or in banner headlines several inches high.

Sir Douglas has been delivering his lectures much more in the first of these two veins. From what I have gleaned, a number of his listeners may have found it all a bit below their treachancy thresholds. Yet if you ignore the low-key delivery and pay attention to the content, then you may form quite a different impression.

In fact this has been a powerful set of lectures, drawing its strength equally from the speaker's formidable store of information and experience, his patient even-handedness and his

lucidity of expression. In each lecture he has fixed on one or more problems of government - such as the tendency of cabinets to evade genuine policy discussion, the serious inadequacy of resources and support which always undermines a party in opposition and the failure of successive governments to face the fact of a better informed, less biddable electorate.

He has gone on to examine what else might be done, rejecting many attractive alternatives on cogent arguments of impracticability. But he has left standing a number of interesting possibilities, including the permanent royal commission, which ought to be a lasting reproach to governments if they fail to explore them.

Indeed, in seeking more responsive and efficient government, Sir Douglas has done us the service of identifying important areas in which it is neither, and while making plain the difficulties of doing better, he has left us in no doubt that better is both desirable and possible.

The final lecture can be heard again tomorrow (Radio 3) and there will be a discussion of the entire series on January 25 at 8.15pm (Radio 4), not next Wednesday as announced by continuity and in a recent *Radio Times*.

As a radio playwright, Jane Beeson has established a reputation as an acute, sensitive observer of human relationships. Her work presents a quiet, well-ordered surface, but we know from a phrase or a tone of voice that below the surface all is far from well. So it was in *The Deception* of the Thrush (Radio 4, December 5

and 11; director, Cherry Cookson).

Louise (Anna Nygh) goes off to New York leaving her much older cohab, Bernard (Richard Pasco), and his 17-year-old daughter Claire (Phoebe Nicholls) to fend for themselves. But Claire has overheard a conversation between Louise and Bernard's younger business colleague Richard (Nicholas Farrell) which leads her - and us - to fear that Louise may use the trip as an opportunity to leave Bernard.

We listen through Claire's ears, sensitized by what she knows, and pick up many dubious signals from the adult world. Can Claire, as she would like, protect her father from what she thinks is going to happen? But it doesn't happen. Louise returns on schedule, brimming with affection. And are we wrong at this point to suspect the rebound from a rather nasty scene with Richard in New York and to wonder what the future holds?

If this was radio drama near its best, something of its worst can be heard in David Besty's serial, *The Magic Carpet* (Radio 4, Sundays and Wednesdays; director, Brian Miller). Listening to this story of the R101 catastrophe, you may indeed wonder what decade we are in. I have not often heard dialogue, characterization and radio writing skills at such a low level since the mid 1960s nadir of *Afternoon Theatre*. The performances are made to match. But perhaps it is all quite appropriate for a drama about gasbags...

David Wade

Concert

Opposites attract

Lontano/Martinez Purcell Room

Writing of Webern's Four Pieces for violin and piano in the current *Musical Times*, Arnold Whittall makes the highly provocative suggestion that we have been wrong to look for seeds of unity in atonal music of this sort, that we should hear rather a range of contrasts displayed and completed. Perhaps this is something that performers of Webern have known all along.

Certainly the performers of these same pieces, Ruth Crouch and Shelagh Sutherland, allowed the first movement simply and gently to play out its balance of oppositions, with evenly sustained violin notes and justly weighted piano chords that had relinquished all shaping effort.

The faster numbers, though, demanded and got a more hectic engagement, for it is only when the notes are few that they can wholly dislocate themselves from any unifying force.

On the other hand, there is Brian Ferneyhough's ironically titled *Unity Capsule*, the Anna-purna II of flute music, where the "capsule" is a quarter-hour stretch of the most fiendishly difficult music spinning off in every conceivable direction. Here, too, the performer is meant to be frustrated in his attempts to bend the music to

his own purposes, since there is so very much else to think about, and Ingrid Culliford last night came closer than anyone else in my experience to the ideal of dedication.

She openly acknowledged the strain she was under while sticking there and achieving a thoroughly remarkable intensity of effort and variety of effect. A concluding gasp was her one moment of self-dramatization, thoroughly justified.

If Ferneyhough is one of the few composers still seriously concerned with the energy of fragmentation in Webern music from around 1910, Ligeti well represents the alternative comic viewpoint. It was a good piece of programming to follow *Unity Capsule* with his *Novulitas subversiva* and its absurd drama of disintegrated music for three singers and seven players.

Penelope Walmsley-Clark, Linda Hirst and Bruce Ogston acted out their myriad vocal personae with happy enthusiasm under well-timed direction from Odaline de la Martinez.

Miss Walmsley-Clark took a quite different role, that of eloquent but ice-cold enchantress, in Oliver Knussen's setting of an Apollinaire vision, *Océan de terre*. This beautifully made score, variously globular and sprightly, was firmly tackled by Lontano.

Paul Griffiths

Television

Hearty mischief

A kind of ill-health clinic where the disaffected affluent go to be stuffed with over-rich food, sufficed with expensive wines, subjected to unaccustomed exercise, and patronized by the proprietor was the situation of Andrew Davies's black comedy *Heartattack Hotel* on BBC2 last night.

Usually the two functions of over-indulgence and over-exercising are separated. Both frequently have great expense in common, with less of a guilt-feeling, and less satisfaction perhaps, attaching to the latter.

Despite the coincidence of gourmet living with a regimen calculated to strain an SAS man, none of the guests in this hotel had any early suspicion of mischief afoot. Nor were they alerted by the extraordinary nature of their companions or the extravagant behaviour of the owner, played just short of extravagantly by Michael Gough.

The hero, a doctor - 40, fed-up, and fast-fading - is seeking

without much optimism to dissipate his ennui with his mistress, a noble dynamo less well-bred but of harder disposition and game for anything or, it appears, anybody.

One such game finds her in bed with a corpse, and by this time we were aware that the denouement would be as corpse-strewn as the last of *Hanley*. The owner later comes clean, expressing his belief that "we feel we can help them (the guests) into the darkness with dignity".

It was sustained by good acting - particularly by Amanda Hillwood as the noble one, Hugh Fraser, the doctor, Robert Lang as a constantly erupting estate agent, and Madsge Ryan, the owner's wife - a luxurious setting, and the direction of Mike Vardy. It was more an occasion for the occasional chuckle than continuous laughter, but it did well enough, as one would expect with Rosemary Hill as producer.

Dennis Hackett

Opera

Earthbound

Hansel and Gretel Bloomsbury

The Bloomsbury Theatre is celebrating Christmas, and its hosting over the last two or three years of a stimulating run of "fringe" opera productions, with a show of its very own *Hansel and Gretel*, long absent from London's professional stages, is the theatre's first house production, and the main sponsor, Prudential, has given free tickets for a theatre-full of underprivileged children on Christmas Eve.

In view of all this it would be nice to report, with Gretel, the "this place must be enchanted". But, alas, it is not. Not only for the sweetness of her voice is Eileen Hulse's Sandman one of the most potent forces of the evening. Humperdinck's music, full of echoes and surprises, of forest murmurs and sparks of Straussian magic, is flattened by the theatre orchestra and Christopher Fittled to a soporific mezzo-forte of mood and movement.

On stage too, the dramatic tension that is lacking in Christopher Renshaw's staging

has to be generated by rather a lot of smoke without, at very much more than a few light bulbs twinkle nicely round the angels' scaffolding frame, or wink fearfully behind the wry forest bushes. In Robin Don's Habitually land of early 1970s chic, Hansel and Gretel, caught between realism and the search for a style, spend their time limbering up in a rather arch set of little exercises devised for them by Sally Gilpin.

They sing well enough: Jill Washington's Gretel (taking turns with Catherine Benson) is sweet and nimble; Maria Aguz's Hansel (next week Jane Findlay) is vocally sound and imaginative as well. Catherine McCord's Gertrude and, particularly, Glenville Hargreaves's Peter, make their mark vocally if not dramatically.

Sheila Steafel's misguidedly comic Witch is, as she says "harmless as a baby chid". Deceptively batty, it is difficult to know whether it is her inefficiency or that of the staging that keeps her and her broomstick as earthbound as the entire production.

Hilary Finch



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THE TIMES DIARY

No trouble brewing

It is disappointing to learn that the England cricketers will not have to confess to hopeless alcohol addiction to obtain a foreigners' drinking permit when they visit the Islamic state of Pakistan in the New Year.

Vat VIIX

The same traveller swears that there is a brand of South American whisky which boasts on the label "Brewed in the cellars of Buckingham Palace by George VI himself!"

Tacked swiftly

There are about a dozen new rugby books in the shops at present, all the fruits of the usual protracted agonies. It takes a man like Andy Ripley to write a book in one afternoon.

Heresy

In India, the three great concerns of life are politics, religion and cricket. The boundaries between them have never been clearly defined. After India's debacle in the fifth Test against the West Indies at Calcutta, the matter was raised in Parliament.



BARRY FANTONI

Doc and Cop

Managers: I am afraid that associating Tommy Docherty with a vacant managerial job is hardly front page stuff. Still, the current speculation linking him with the vacancy at Stoke has the redeeming novelty of placing Steve Coppell as his number 2.

Quote of the week: "It is strange, but I guess I could earn more money in amateur athletics than I do in professional football." Renato Nehemiah, wide receiver for San Francisco 49ers, and world record holder for high hurdles, banned from amateur athletics because of his "professionalism".

More managers: Final proof of the supremacy of the cult of manager comes in Match magazine. I spent much of my childhood scoring goals against the garage door when I was Roy of the Roovers, but Match's hero, Harry Cannon, is "boss of once great Slantown Town whose attempts to clear his name following the disgrace of a bribe scandal have touched a raw nerve with the underworld."

Footnote: "There is no crisis at Arsenal," Tommy Caton.

Simon Barnes

The Horse-traders' Handicap

by Julian Haviland

The struggle for the chairmanship of the Select Committee on Defence has entertained spectators at Westminster this week and some of the participants - cheerfully mopping their bleeding noses yesterday - enjoyed it too.

But beneath the rivalries a serious question was asked and the answer given - will help Parliament's reputation. It is that backbench members are powerless to fill even important backbench posts with candidates of their choice if the Government is determined to prevent them.

On Thursday the Prime Minister, through the exertions of the Government Chief Whip Mr John Wakeham, succeeded in imposing on the Defence Committee, against the will of the majority of its members, the chairman of her choice, Sir Humphrey Atkins.

As a former Northern Ireland Secretary, in daily contact for two and a half years with senior figures in the armed services, Sir Humphrey has been more closely concerned with defence matters than his critics have allowed. He may prove more expert and less compliant than they expect.

But Mrs Thatcher, who had to deploy all her powers of patronage to put Sir Humphrey in place, did not do so to strengthen a committee which may well ask awkward questions when the Treasury next

raids the defence budget or when the costs of the Trident programme start to swell.

The new departmental select committees were created by the last Parliament as a shining weapon for MPs to use to prod ministers and Whitehall. But they expired at the election and there was a six-month delay before they were reconstituted this week.

There are signs that ministers and those who advise them think that the best time to hobble the committees is at the outset, by interfering with the choosing of members by the nominally independent Committee of Selection. Even then, an all-party committee may learn to embarrass ministers if a strong chairman, respected by all members, can make a team of them. So, better to fix the chairmanship too.

This time the fixing took some doing. At first the Committee of Selection, striving to meet its obligations to reflect the balance of parties in the House, nominated seven Conservatives and four Opposition MPs. Atkins was nobody's first choice. Two other Conservatives, Michael Mates and Michael Marshall, had backing in the Conservative group, Marshall was preferred by the three Labour men and the Social Democrat, who agreed to vote together.

The Opposition Chief Whip, Michael Cox, told that Atkins was

the Downing Street favourite, tried to induce the Labour men to vote for him, but had dusty answers. Cox, exercising his own patronage, had his own candidates for the chairs of other select committees which, by agreement with Wakeham, were to go to Labour. But if he and his side let Wakeham down, the deal will be off.

Wakeham was active on another front. He sent an emissary to James Molyneux, leader of the Official Ulster Unionists, who was aggrieved that his party had no member on any committee. An understanding was reached that Conservative votes would be used to take the Social Democrat, John Cartwright, off the committee and put on the Ulster Unionist, Ken Maginnis, instead.

Maginnis does not admire Atkins but was expected to learn to do so quite quickly. These precautions proved unnecessary. The Conservatives solved their own problem in the end, and outsiders did not count. They decided to reach agreement inside the party caucus and, once this course became imperative, from that moment Atkins could not lose. The squabble was to be kept in the family, and in the Conservative family, what mother says still counts.

But it was hard pouncing. The four Tory Indians met to choose one of their three would-be chiefs. Two were for Atkins; one each for Mates

and Marshall. Leaving Atkins aside, they tried again and split 2-2. The loss of a coin between Mates and Marshall was suggested but rejected. It was the only way Atkins could have been stopped. Mates and Marshall would neither drop out for Atkins nor join forces against him.

Late on Thursday night the whips worked again on Marshall and Mates in turn. They were pitted with whisky and urged not to rock the boat. There was a promise that Atkins would go to the Prime Minister as soon as the Prime Minister thought it safe to hold a by-election in his Spelthorne seat.

On Friday night all seven Conservatives were called to Wakeham's room and at last he prevailed, but on certain terms. Atkins would be chairman, but he promised to stand down after 18 months. Wakeham in turn had to promise that the next chairman will be chosen from the existing committee members, so that no new placement is found from outside.

The Conservative Establishment, tough as it has proved, has not won the whole game. The Prime Minister's plan is that Atkins should also have a more senior post, the chairmanship of the Liaison Committee, which controls the Budget of the select committee and decides which estimates are debated in Parliament.

The author is Political Editor of The Times

David Hewson

Should we then ban News at Ten?

Parliament rarely looks its best when duty demands that it dictate what people see and hear. In evidence, I submit the following exchange, from the third sitting of the Standing Committee C on the Video Recordings Bill:

Mr Graham Bright (Luton, South): "There would be considerable scope for argument as to how far that [an amendment which would replace 'animal' with 'sentient being'] would extend down the animal kingdom, and even whether it would extend to plant life. I am advised, for example, that an amoeba might be considered to be sentient on the grounds that it would move away from noxious chemicals... Similarly, I am told that a plant will respond to the force of gravity: if it is turned upside down, the stem and roots will start to grow in the opposite direction."

Mr Robert McClelland (Caitness and Sutherland): "Will the hon. gentleman explain why he thinks that exposure to the force of gravity could possibly be described as 'mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence'?"

Mr Bright: "There is an element of force that is unnatural if one turns a plant upside down."

And elsewhere. Mr McLennan: "The second purpose of the amendment is to make it clear beyond doubt... that the exclusion is not intended to apply to violent acts of nature whose victims are not sentient beings. I shall cite two examples. I do not believe that a nature film showing the eruption of Mount St Helens, which is a violent act of nature, is the sort of thing that we wish to catch by the clause. The bulldozing of a high rise tower block may be described as an act of gross violence, but that is not likely to be caught by the clause. My amendment would preclude any doubt on that score."

Standing Committee C is not so far as it can be ascertained, some elaborate joke being perpetrated by Mr Tom Stoppard, or a festive attempt at a Westminster pantomime.

Yet something very odd is clearly happening when a serious, and, in most quarters, welcome attempt to ban the video nasty suddenly turns into a debate on cruelty to amoebae and beaustiness to plants. To gauge just how odd, let us consider some of the items which could be banned from video as set to the public if the Bill, as now drafted, becomes law.

There would be no "mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence" between animals, consenting or otherwise. One presumes that this would not be communicated to the beast of bush and jungle, but only to the film-makers who would no longer be permitted to document their behaviour until Leo turned vegetarian. While it would still be legal to hunt and kill a fox, the criminal law could be upon you were you to film the event and offer the result for sale to the general public. They could have watched the whole thing live, if you will pardon the expression, in the first place.

Naturally, if this discreet veil is to

be drawn over the cruelty of animals to one another, it will also be extended to homo sapiens. Attractive as this may seem, there are one or two problems. The most important is that, whatever Standing Committee C may decree, human beings undoubtedly are cruel to one another on a regular basis, as any news bulletin shows.

On the present basis, anyone could be open to prosecution for taping a suitable edition of the television news, the content of which is controlled under different regulations, and then offering it for sale as a home video. ITN's video about the Falklands campaign, which depicts some horrifying wounds, might attract criminal prosecution for containing the very material which has been shown on peak-time television to millions.

Once one steps from fact to fiction, the banned list grows ever longer. What, for instance, would one make of the blinding of Gloucester or Oedipus? Who would ever again be allowed to dramatize our best example of "mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence", enacted on Good Friday?

This may not be the intention of most of those concerned with the Bill, but intentions do not always meet their mark. One of the great failings of a legislative approach to deciding what is aesthetically good or bad is that it depends on the notion that such judgments can be made with the certainty of, say, charting the ocean.

As Mr Matthew Parris MP has pointed out to the committee: "If we were to try to remove from literature those things which might have a bad effect on immature and maladjusted adults, who knows where that might end? Many British people have seen bull fighting, and that is the main reason why it is so greatly disliked... the turning of the tide of American public opinion on the Vietnam war was when newsreel pictures were shown of little Vietnamese children running away from American soldiers with their backs on fire because of napalm. Showing people things can make them change their minds about them, not make them want to copy them."

"I do not say that people should be shown everything; there are some things which they should not see. But the committee should remember that merely because something is unpleasant and we do not believe it should happen is not sufficient reason for thinking it should not appear on video."

Or on television or the cinema screen, for that matter, for those are surely the next targets if a new and more restrictive code can find its way into the private home. A law to ban genuine video nasties will command popular support. One which attempts to define good taste, morally as well as legally, will fail. It may be an uncomfortable truth but the acceptable can only be defined in reverse; the unacceptable needs to exist and, on occasion, proclaim its existence to enable us to draw the line.

Roy Strong

The taste that begins with laying the table

Christmas is one of those occasions when even the most run-of-the-mill households pause and attempt to essay one of the arts of living, table-laying. Recently Lady Clark told me how, when she was busy in the kitchen preparing lunch, her husband would go out into the garden in search of the "bouquet" for the table. "Please remember not to pick those two irises," she would say, but he always did, reflecting exactly his appreciation of the aesthetic of the table.

There is a marvellous museum in Stockholm which exhibits the history of table-laying. Down a darkened corridor the visitor goes past room after room laid in period style, one a ladies' dinner held in a bedroom by a roaring fire, as in the engraving by Ambramson Bosse, another evoking the naughtiness of the ancient regime with Sevres porcelain arranged for a meal à deux at a table whose cloth trails to the ground, knotted at the corners. What art the consumption of food has evoked - but always mosaic pieces to be rearranged and reset to capture mood and ambience, from banquet to buffet.

My recollections of memorable tables would form an eccentric list. It would not be particularly governed by splendour at all. It would include a humble lunch of cold meat and salad with Duncan Grant at Charleston. The painted wood table, the pottery, even the food was pure Omega workshops. John Piper's honest scrubbed wood table at Fawley matches it in another way, for from the centre arises a bank of white pottery candlesticks, all sorts and sizes, with cascades of dripping white wax.

Artists' tables are always interesting as they naturally approach them as a form of still life.

No reminiscence of memorable tables can exclude grand ones however. So many of these are a let-down. A ton of antique silver is not necessarily beautiful. The Royal Academy dinner is positively mawkish when it ought to be a visual feast. To it might be applied a remark made to my wife, a short time ago at another grand table. Looking at the explosion of "all-the-year-round chrysanthemums" in the middle, her neighbour commented: "I assume that these will be sent to Golders Green immediately after."

A state banquet at Buckingham Palace provides one of the last glimpses of table-laying in the grand manner. The menu lists the glorious porcelain from which the guests eat, and little cards reveal the antiquity of the vista of candelabra and coppers that stretch in each direction. On that occasion candelabra of alchemilla, marigolds and the delicate restraint of whoever orchestrated this spectacle. How different magnificence and complementarity to a luncheon by an American millionaire, where the museum accession numbers on the plates were noticeable. Nothing like eating off your tax concessions.

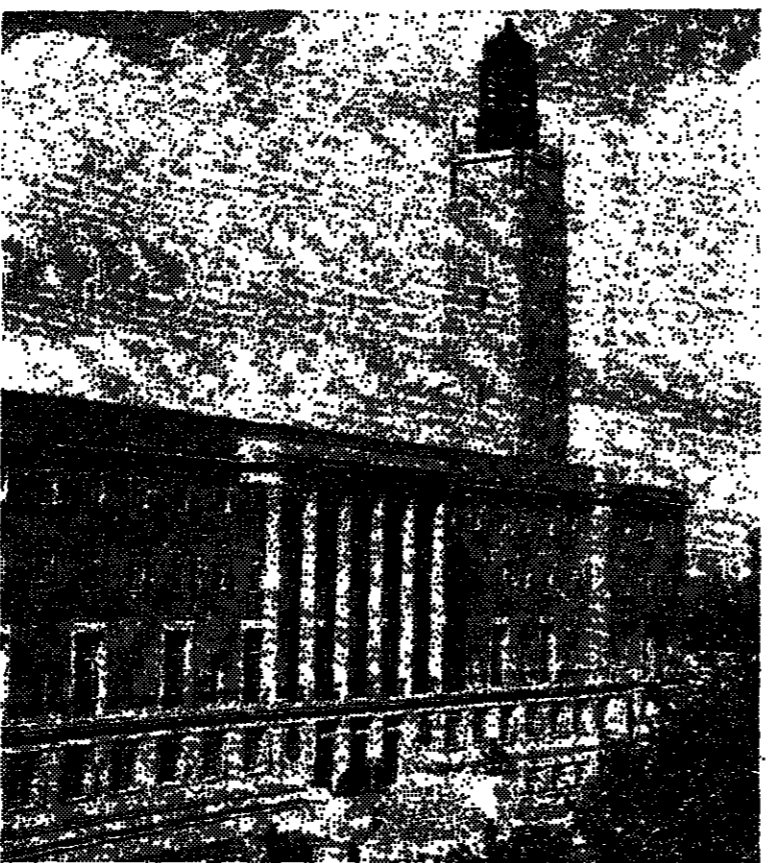
Eating is a wonderful vehicle for looking and not only at flowers and ceramics from the past. Modern ceramic sculpture produces delightful pieces to enliven a table. Bryan Newman's evocation of old London Bridge and John Gandy's garden have been in me endless pleasure. One of the sad aspects of the dining table at 10 Downing Street is the total absence of any contemporary ceramics or silver. There table-laying ought to be celebration of this country's past and present creativity.

The most memorable table I ever had to arrange was a luncheon party for the Queen Mother at Ham House. The table was placed as it would have been in Catherine of Braganza's bedroom, with the Royal visitor sitting so that the garden's lines of perspective met in her eyes. I regret to say that a colleague's bed was despoiled of its lace counterpane, and statuettes of the seasons were ferried down from the V & A, for the occasion.

Sir Roy Strong is director of the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Demolishing the Thirties myth

Sir John Summerson, curator of John Soane's Museum, looks in vain for fine Thirties architecture



Norwich City Hall: the best of an era?

Now that I come to look calmly at the architecture of the 1930s, how does the decade strike me? I am sorry to say that it strikes me very much as it did then, and at the Thirties Exhibition at the Hayward Gallery a few years ago; as a decade lacking in vigour of invention or refinement of style.

Indeed it had no style. The Gothic of Scott and Classic of Lutyens and Curtis Green had their roots in the world of pre-1914. Perhaps the decorative, quasi-modern style of Oliver Hill is as near as you get to anything coherently and intrinsically "Thirties".

Was there, among all the competitions for town halls, fire stations and other institutional paraphernalia one which can bear comparison with the competition winners of late Victorian and Edwardian days - Colcutt, Brydon, Aston Webb? I doubt it. Perhaps Norwich City Hall is an exception, or the RIBA building. I would hate to lose either of them, but they have that Scandinavian anaemia which disqualifies them from the front rank.

What was wrong with the Thirties? It was a period of transition, and was very self-conscious about this fact. "We live in an age of transition" was a recurrent cliché of after-dinner speeches. The clever answer to this was, of course, that all ages are ages of transition.

Two buildings come to mind which have lately attracted much attention, and which expose the schizophrenic fissions of the Thirties: Battersea Power Station and the Firestone factory. The power station is an engineering structure of some nobility, which has been artistically modelled by a cathedral architect. The factory is a commonplace industrial building tacked on to an

Art Deco paraphrase of Burnet's British Museum. The first is a case of misapplied skill - the wrong skill. The second is a case of monumental architecture cynically deployed, skin deep, as an eye-catcher. Nobody in the Thirties would ever have believed that a later (but not very much later) generation would wish to preserve such muddle and mediocrity.

To me it is a great puzzle why people do want to preserve buildings such as these. There is evidently something about them which appeals deeply. Is it the very grime of their Thirties humour? Do they bring out, as it were in caricature, the contradictions and neurosis of the time? Is the fascination they

exercise a sort of voyeurism? I think that must be the answer, and I do not know what to make of it.

I would not shed a tear for Battersea Power Station. I suppose it is a fine brick mass, but those four belching chimneys at the four corners, pulling it apart, as it were, are to me really painful. Archer tried this game at St John's in Smith Square. It didn't work, and the church came to be called Queen Anne's footstool. It works even less at Battersea - Gavin Stamp's billiard table.

I suppose this may be dismissed as a "subjective judgement". As a product of its time - at no other time could such a thing possibly have been erected. Battersea Power

Bernard Levin: the way we live now

Once upon a time it was the artist who suffered - now it's us

If Anton Webern were alive today (which thank the Lord he's not, sir) he would be 100; set off by the century, his music has been raging through Europe like influenza, and many of the victims have developed hideous secondary symptoms in the form of Berg, Stravinsky and even Varese. Prognosis in most cases is grave, and where Boulez and Schoenberg have set in, little hope can remain: at the Barbican on Tuesday, for instance, the Vienna Philharmonic under Mehta were unable to fill the hall, despite the fact that the second half of the concert consisted of the Schubert C major Symphony (a marvellously sonorous and exciting performance, incidentally), because the first half was devoted entirely to Webern. (The one thing that can be said in favour of Webern is that his works are mercifully short; each of the Five Orchestral Pieces, for instance, consists of not much more than three plinks and a plonk, and even the Six Orchestral Pieces, which figured in Tuesday's programme and are massive structures by comparison, were all over in less than 10 minutes the lot, with an average for each item of five plinks, two plinks and a grrrrrr.)

We can, I think, safely take it that no man in his senses wants to listen to this stuff or enjoys it when he does so; some think they ought to listen to it, but even the writer of Tuesday's programme-notes ("... shook off the last trappings of tonality... skeletal thematism... revolutionary compression... steadily accelerating to a catastrophic disintegration... made it sound as though the First Principle of Medicine - the nastier it tastes the more good it is doing you - was being applied. So what was it doing up front in the concert, making us wait three-quarters of an hour for Schubert?")

Mark, I do not suggest that Webern was a charlatan, let alone that Schoenberg and Berg were; indeed, I do not think that even Stockhausen is having us on. They make these horrible noises because they feel like it, not to impress Mr Hans Keller, and it is no more an answer to say that the hall would

have been entirely empty without the Schubert in the bill than it is an equal and opposite answer to say that Berio must be a genius because at the first performance of Beethoven's Third Symphony somebody in the audience shouted "I'd give another five marks if the thing would stop". This subject is a minefield sown with undistributed middles, and great care must be taken while travelling through it.

All the same, these people do make horrible noises, and nobody enjoys listening to them. What has happened?

First, steadily growing throughout our era, is the belief that art is not something to be enjoyed, but something through which we are to suffer. But that is not true. Certainly tastes differ, and the fact that I would not give fourpence a square yard for the entire works of Francis Bacon does not affect his prices; all the same, I have never seen, in any gallery showing his pictures, any expression on the faces of those looking at them other than revulsion and rejection, and neither have you.

The defenders of the Sacher-Masoch Theory of Art will say that we live in an ugly world, full of moral and political dissonance and distortion, and that it is the artist's duty to reflect that world; whence not only the nasty noises, the hideous paintings and the New Nihilism of the "committed" playwrights, but also such lunacy as action painting and aleatoric music. What these people forget is that the world has always been ugly, cruel and capricious, yet only in very recent times has art begun to insist that those qualities were the most significant; and that art must take on their nature.

Why is random art - paint flung from radio atmospherics, novels published loose-leafed, to be shunned before reading - such nonsense? Do you suppose that Shakespeare didn't know that the world could fly apart at any moment, and that the Wars of the Roses had ended only 80 years before he was born? Do you imagine that Rembrandt, because he lived in Holland, had never heard of the Massacre of St Bartholomew, only 34 years before he was born? Do you think that Bach would have enjoyed himself if Charles XII had come to tea? Do you believe that Dostoevsky thought life was a bowl of cherries? Of course such artists knew that they had to assimilate suffering and refine it into their art; that they had to face ugliness before they could conceive beauty; that the ice of the world is eternally thin, and will always crack and groan and roar in travail as the artist tiptoes his way across it.

But that is why art is central, and the artist's duty to keep it so. Art is the incantation that binds humankind, truth and beauty together, and it is able to serve that purpose because, and only because, it can keep simultaneously in view the lesser truth that the world can fall to pieces at any moment and the greater truth that it will not.

The ugliness, and - much more significant - the triviality, of so much of modern art is a reflection of the fact that so many artists have ceased to be capable of that dual vision, and that some deny that the duality exists at all, or even maintain that only with respect to the universe is that it is charged and primed with disintegration. (What was it that led to the present danger of nuclear annihilation if not the

splitting of the atom, that ultimate, hideous, unforgivable impiety of putting asunder that which God had joined together?)

This is the mistake of the false prophets, who strive ceaselessly (but, happily, in vain) to lead the common people astray. I am myself one of the common people, and it is on their behalf and at their unanimous request that I am speaking today, just as on Tuesday night I acted as their representative when, dutifully listening to the Webern, I made a face as of one who has swallowed a quince, and waited patiently until Schubert arrived with his great hymn to wholeness - a wholeness so complete that it can even encompass fragmentation, just as the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven is a hymn to the light so overwhelming that it even contains darkness.

Atonality was the great barrier reef on which modern music shattered, as the stream-of-consciousness was the torpedo that sank the novel and abstraction the anaesthetic that put painting to sleep. But these things are not just techniques; they are a direct consequence of the sickness in the artist's soul, a sickness which denies the duty to face the void without flinching to declare that the world will yet be saved, and to weave their single strand of the great rope made of form and meaning equally - that holds the universe together. And I know this: another century hence, no one will think of celebrating Webern's bicentenary, because he will be utterly forgotten. But the C major Symphony of Schubert will still be as fresh, as glorious, and as true as ever.

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REHABILITATE, NOT DECAPITATE

A glimpse has now been offered of the arguments Mr Patrick Jenkin is using privately to secure for his rate capping Bill...

Mr Jenkin's second argument is that government must be able to rely on the cooperation of local authorities in the realization of its economic and social objectives...

When Parliament receives the measure it should grant a selective power of rate capping, provided the criteria are objectively defined...

CAVEAT TALPA

The first impulse of journalists over the affair of the Ministry of Defence leak is of respect and fellow-feeling towards The Guardian...

information received by The Guardian was in the distinct though growing category of material sent anonymously...

For their financial management, both the secretariat (1983-84 Budget £5.6m; British contribution, £1.4m) and the Commonwealth Fund...

CHARITABLE GIVING AND TAKING

New figures from the National Council for Voluntary Organizations show a noteworthy increase in the subventions from central government to voluntary and charitable bodies...

capped, but also to organizations (for example many housing associations, and most groups with that wessel word "community" in their titles) staffed by welfare state professionals...

public money and concessions by the state on tax revenue. Charities enjoy tax and rating privileges; givers get some relief...

Accounting for the Commonwealth

From Professor Mike Faber. Sir, Others must also be wondering what indeed you in your leader ("Called to account", December 2) to turn such heavy artillery of insinuation and innuendo against the Commonwealth Secretariat...

Public relations in aid of Government

From Mr John Andrew. Sir, David Burnside's article on the Conservative Government's need for public relations (December 9) makes sombre reading except as preparation for Orwell's projection for 1984...

Disposal of rail archive

From Dr P. W. Lewis. Sir, What principles determine the continuing disposal of our national railway archive by British Railways Board (BRB)?

India and slavery

From Mr M. Dubej. Sir, In an article entitled "Crisis time ahead for UN slavery group" by Caroline Moorehead (November 2) it has been alleged that India is among the countries "believed to be hostile to the Working Group on Slavery of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities"...

Peace in our time?

From Mr Graham Greene. CH Sir, What short memories politicians have. Mr Heseltine says that it is because we retain our deterrent that "we have lived in peace for the longest period of contemporary history"...

The consumer case

From the Chairman of the Electricity Consumers' Council. Sir, May I comment on Mr Alex Henney's statement about this council in his letter in today's Times (December 14)?

Prosecution by stores

From Mr Donald Ellison. Sir, Ms Stern, writing (December 8) as Director of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, unjustly dismisses as "simply nonsense" what must surely be a valid and important point made by Baroness Phillips (November 24), writing as Director of the Association for the Prevention of Theft in Shops...

Threat in El Salvador

From Mr Jack Shapiro. Sir, Sir Alfred Sherman's letter (December 12) detailing his experiences in El Salvador does not include the points made by your own correspondent today. It may be true that the people of El Salvador

CND's political bias

From Dr J. M. Lewis. Sir, Your leader (December 5) is mistaken in claiming that "at its conference last year CND decided not to advocate Britain's departure from Nato". CND is committed by its own constitution (section A) to the unilateral abandonment by Britain of... nuclear alliances...

Blaming the computer

From Mr B. H. Parker. Sir, What is it about computers that encourages people to make irrational statements about them? Your headline, "Computer error blamed in Korean jet disaster" (December 9), is an example. The underlying text reported that the unfortunate pilots probably inserted wrong data into their navigational computer...

Uneminent and trivial

From Mr Kingsley Amis. Sir, Well, if you print a whole article where somebody complains about something somebody else might have said on a television programme, you will have to put up with a corrective letter on the matter...

Uneminent and trivial

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14 Values: Presents with a future, decorations to make the table a treat; In the Garden: Times project progress report

THE TIMES Saturday

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17-23 DECEMBER 1983 A WEEKLY GUIDE TO LEISURE, ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS

Tripping the night fantastic



Photographs by Laurie Spanton

Who cares about the depression? Not the hedonistic youngsters who are flocking to the new kind of big city nightclubs. Max Bell

Swinging London is back. The opening last month of the Hippodrome, a £3m pleasure palace, and the seasonal exigencies have reinforced the belief that the recession can be forgotten. There is a new desire to see and be seen in the brash and expensive hedonistic havens of the city's night life. The New Romantic movement, which has now been assimilated into big fashion, is one reason for the recent proliferation of clubs. The modern obsession with style and individual dress has generated the need for new places where people can congregate and study each other. This desire to parade finds many parallels with the 1920s when an economic slump was offset by a hellbent determination to step out and shine, to ad-lib. The club scene flourished in the 1960s, but then the music was paramount and tastes were more orthodox. Now there is a far more heterogeneous. There is a club to suit everyone: from African to 1940s jump and jive, from smart punk to leather fetishism. Similarly, while the record charts now form the domain of the new breed of teenyboppers, older teenagers and young adults feel less inclined to take it all too seriously. The arrival of the American-style cocktail bar has given British youth the ideal environment in which to celebrate its new-found sense of style and ready money. Live music halls or pubs seem dreary by comparison and today's youth has no intention of adhering to former Prime Minister James Callaghan's injunction to be in bed by 11 o'clock. The clubs, with their late licensing hours, are the natural places in which to flout the depression. "To be an Englishman is to belong to the most exclusive club there is", wrote Ogden Nash. The Camden Palace in London NW1 may not be the most exclusive club in the world, but it has been voted the best in Europe by those who know, and the proof lies in the thousands of addicts of London night life who pass through its

heavily guarded doors six nights a week. They come to Slum It In Style on Tuesdays or luxuriate in Helden on Thursdays. For a few hours metropolitan youth can assume an heroic status, rub shoulders with the stars and indulge in a glittering, noisy fantasy. The Palace is impressive. Formerly the prosaic Music Machine, it was converted for £1m by Messrs Fredericks and Henry, two Coventry businessmen. They added lasers, a barrage of lights, the throbbing dance floor and the inflated circus figures that hang from the ceiling. The effect is futuristic meets art deco. They also added Steve Strange and his partner Rusty Egan. Strange is London's most notorious socialite, a Welsh emigré, aged 24, who presides as Palace host, entertaining his loyal guests in the cocktail bar like a New Wave Beau Brummell or John Wilkes. He and Egan anticipated the 1980s club boom with a succession of smaller ventures, Billies, Club for Heroes, Hell and Blitz, watering holes for the New Romantic movement which spawned the designers Sue Clowes and Stephen Linard and pop stars Spandau Ballet and Boy George. It has been said that once a trend is identified it is over, but the Palace seems to be doing well. At a recent Helden the place was packed for the visit of Divine, an outrageous New York transvestite. On the fourth tier of this vast edifice Bob Bates, the Doncaster-born bar manager, nods good evening to one of the visions of beauty that flock here. This is Dave, aged 19, from Birmingham, his hair arranged like a Spanish galleon under full sail. In his stilettoed wake - "more comfortable than Rush Pupils, mate" - come four more of the Ziggy Stardusts, David Singh, Trojan, Leigh, Bowery and Peter Hammond. Their five-inch platform boots, lured tight, pancake make-up and plaits draw the immediate interest of an Italian film crew, here like everyone else to participate in the clubland phenomenon. Strange holds forth at the bar. It is well past midnight but the place is not yet full: anyone who is anyone arrives late and stays until 3am. An evening at the Palace can be expensive. Admission is £4 and it is not much fun nursing one lager all night. It is, after all, extremely hot. Strange knows that the poorer visitors smuggle in drink, but he still wonders where on earth they get the money from.

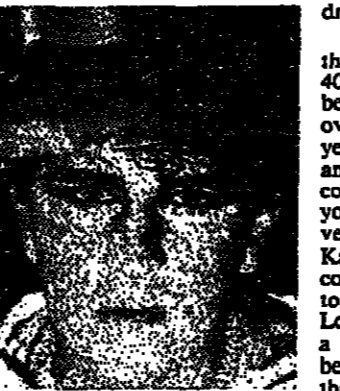
Patsy and Delia, both aged 18, arrive at 10pm and intend to stay until the end. They like the pina colada cocktails and will spend about £30 each before taking a taxi all the way home to Biggin Hill in Kent. "People are fed up with being depressed", Strange says. "These kids have got the latest clothes. I don't know how they manage." In common with the more upmarket clubs the Palace operates a door policy which Strange defines as an attitude. "If people are polite, fine, but if eight guys arrive together that spells trouble." Six tube stops away Peter Stringfellow, the flamboyant 43-year-old proprietor of the Hippodrome, on the old Talk of the Town site just off Leicester Square, sits back and fingers his £800 suede suit with glee. After 20 years of working in and running nightclubs Stringfellow can claim: "I am the best single club owner in Britain. I may look like a rock'n'roll dropout but I am financially sound. The Hippodrome is all mine, bought with pound notes, cash." He spent more than 50,000 of them on the club's opening party. Sharp as a razor blade and son of a steel worker, Stringfellow started his club life in the early 1960s booking the Beatles for £85 at the Black Cat before running the notorious Mojo mod club in Sheffield. He moved into disco with Clandestines and Rockefellas in Leeds, sold these to Mecca and then sank his savings into the Millionaire in Manchester. "I sold that to Granada for a tidy profit and arrived in the West End. I wouldn't be anywhere else. The West End is glamour, it's frivolous but it's entertainment." While Strange at the Palace had been guardedly polite about the Hippodrome as competition, Stringfellow was less charitable about the Palace. "I like the place and I'd like some of their bizarre clientele, but Camden is so provincial it's just like Scunthorpe. I wouldn't have paid three million for a place two streets from here." He also adopts a door policy: "No coach parties from Wigan or scruffs", and one gets the feeling that Christmas office outings would not be over-welcome either. Admission on Friday is £7.50, cocktails are twice Palace prices, a bottle of Dom Perignon will set you back £35. Who pays these prices, I wondered? Tracey and Pete, 21-year-olds from Dartford, had come to the West End because they saw the Hippodrome on television.

Happiness at the Hippodrome: Late-night revellers include the 'Gruesome Threesome', Guardsmen Tony, Merv and Mal (top) They'd tried the Beat Route and Gossips and the Empire but wouldn't go to the Palace. Not their scene. Tracey wasn't sure if this was her scene either and Pete was shocked at the admission price, but if it had been £20 he would have paid. Too embarrassing not to and anyway the club was exclusive, they didn't let in any riff-raff. This was flash, with those lasers. And those sofas! You sank back a foot in those! Seen the lavatorial Hair spray, cognac, the lot! What an experience! Out of this world! It struck me that the Hippodrome was deliberately ostentatious, an extension of its owner's ego, like his other club Stringfellow's. On the hydraulic dance floor the Hot Gossip dance troupe went through their sexy routine while a DJ jollied the hordes along like a holiday camp redcoat. Around the club

Sitting pretty at the Camden Palace: Some of the faces who have brought a touch of glamour to the wilds of north-west London community. It was out of the closet and into the eyes of the world. One club which perhaps sparked off this wave of narcissistic yet proselytizing display was Heaven, the gay club situated underneath the arches near Charing Cross station. It was packed on the night I visited and the customers were paying rapt attention to the various acts on show. Ian Levine the DJ, was pleased. The success of the night, a dance routine recorded for posterity by film director Ken Russell, indicated the club's position as style leader even among the straight clubs. Both the Palace and the Hippodrome have started gay nights of their own. Outside London the recession has given all the clubs a different atmosphere. Manchester's Hacienda, Liverpool's State, Glasgow's Henry Afrikas and Nottingham's Rock City are excellent, but they cannot afford London's elitism. Drinks and admission are usually half the prices charged in the capital. Inside the people seem friendlier, there are fewer posers, the dress is less self-conscious. Derby's Blue Note illustrates this. A club with a capacity of 400, run by Phil Long, it has been attracting custom from all over the Midlands for four years. It has videos, lights, bars and food, but it also has conversation. The clientele is young, mostly female and buys very few cocktails. Dawn and Kaihi, aged 18, and both at college, have travelled 15 miles to get here. They have been to London only twice and never to a club. They like the music because it's not too obscure. To them it is more like a party than a club. Melanie and Rachel, aged 20, are not trendy cocktail bar people though they might celebrate the end of their Government Training Scheme week with a Malibu cocktail. They rent the places like 42nd Street, where customers pretend to wear designer clothes. Those clubs want nice people but Derby isn't full of nice people. And being choosy costs you custom. The Blue Note started off with a door policy, but after two weeks it was empty, so now it lets anyone in. Back in London the smarter clubs were arranging their Christmas events. The Palace is offering special menus ranging from £8.50 to £14.50 a head, a Blondes Only party and a New Year's Eve Masked Ball. At the Hippodrome, Stringfellow is hosting a Variety Club do for 800 children. For the

regulars it is like Christmas every day. At Heaven David Inches promised: "There'll be lots and lots of snow, £500 worth." But the hippest new club in London, the Circus, has no special seasonal plans. Under Jeremiah Haysi it is a moving irregular event that has operated from warehouses, established clubs and the Scottish Regimental Drill Hall opposite Buckingham Palace - the ultimate coup de theatre. The Circus may soon be symptomatic of a new breed of cheaper club with £1 admission and £1 drinks. Dr Johnson's well-worn aphorism "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford" is still true. For those who can afford it.

clubmen: Hosts Peter Stringfellow (left) and Steve Strange



THE HIPPODROME, corner of Charing Cross Road and Cranbourn Street, London WC2 (437 4311) Doors open 9pm-3am. Licensed until 2am (New Year's Eve 3am). Food in the Gallery Restaurant, minimum charge £4 a person. Wine from £4.75. Club entry £3-£4. Lager £1.20, cocktails from £2.50. Live music, disco, personal appearances, videos. CAMDEN PALACE, 1a Camden High Street, London NW1 (387 0428) Doors open 9pm-3am. Licensed until 2am (New Year's Eve 3am). Food in the Gallery Restaurant, minimum charge £4 a person. Wine from £4.75. Club entry £3-£4. Lager £1.20, cocktails from £2.50. Live music, disco, personal appearances, videos. HEAVEN (including Caller Bar), The Arches, Villiers Street, London WC2 (839 3852) Doors open 10pm-3am. Licensed until 3am, except Sunday 11.30pm. Food in Heaven restaurant, main dishes about £1.60. House wine £4.80, pint lager £1, house drinks on Wednesday until midnight 50p. Spirits with mixer £1. Club entry from 50p Wednesdays for UBAOs to £3.50 Saturdays. Some union card concessions, check with club for details. Live music, personal appearances, videos, disco. BLUE NOTE CLUB, 14a Sadler Gate, Derby (0332 42569) Doors open 9pm-2am. Fast food from £1 in the Diner. House wine £4.50, Red Stripe lager £1.10, spirits with mixer £1.05, cocktails from £2. Club entry £1.50-£2.50. Live music, special nights, videos. THE HACIENDA, 11-13 Whitworth Street West, Manchester (061 236 5081) Doors open 9pm-2am. Food from £1, lager 80p, cocktails from £2. Club entry £1-£3.50. Live music, self-defence classes, videos.

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To live in California is to inhabit a world of extremes. Michael Watkins gets to grips with the weird, appealing ways of the place where one day the kissing will have to stop

Cable cars and stars in the land of lunacy

Jessica Mitford flew out of San Francisco the day I flew in. I don't think there was anything personal in it: a question of imperfect timing, that's all. As I was checking into Nob Hill, she was doing much the same thing in London.

No, I wasn't being coy about Nob Hill; it's the address of the Mark Hopkins Hotel, from where you can watch fog steal in from the Pacific, obscuring Golden Gate Bridge in minutes.

"Everybody's Favourite City" is San Francisco's modest claim, coined, I believe, by Alistair Cooke. The song-writer takes up the refrain: someone left his heart in San Francisco, where little cable cars climb halfway to the stars. Someone else left his heart at Alcatraz, break and impregnable out there in the bay; his name was Al Capone. Usually you could hear the grinding lurch of those cable cars as they climbed vertiginously from Powell and Market Streets; but this time they were stilled, the system being overhauled for the first time in history - so everyone walked, breathlessly, rapturously, in this breathless, rapturous city.

In my room, I spread out the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Ernie's Restaurant on Montgomery Street was still going, and Lauren Bacall was still going too, starring in *Woman of the Year* at the Golden Gate Theatre. Then I noticed that Rosemary Clooney was opening that evening, a supper show at the Fairmont; and because, at 11, I was unrequitedly in love with Miss Cloney, I booked a table.

Today Miss Cloney is a grandmother, wholesome as a wheatgrass loaf, and she belted out "Come on-a My House", and she caressed a foggy day in London town and I loved her.

all over again. I told her so. That was after the show, in her suite. "This is a civilized city", she told me. "More European than anywhere in the States, they care about food, clothes, style. They care about caring."

I don't know exactly what caring about caring means. It is one of those meaningless Americanisms like "meaningful", or "have a nice day". Everyone keeps telling you to have a nice day; even empty elevators are programmed to wish you a nice day.

Next morning I went for a walk through Ghirardelli Square to Fisherman's Wharf, where a girl, far too glamorous to be in the hallelujah business, asked, "You wanna be saved, brother?"

There are lots of kooky girls in the Cannery. They are interested in yoga, vegetarianism, cyto-genetics; and they will all turn into little old ladies in tennis shoes. Yet they are tolerated, venerated even; for San Francisco is a most forgiving city: the blacks forgive the whites who forgive the gays who forgive the heterosexuals who forgive the Jews who forgive the gays. Bald is beautiful; and there are toppers girls in bars watched gleefully by men with toppers minds. "Talk to a totally nude girl for \$1", I read on a sign; it seemed a friendly thing to do.

Remembering her book *Hans and Rebekah*, I asked Jessica Mitford Treuhaff's husband, Bob, if she was still rebellious. "She likes to preserve the image of a rebel", he said. He also said that California has a very seductive element to the British; he should know, the Treuhaffs have lived in San Francisco since 1943 - why, in southern California alone, there are 375,000 expatriate British.

Resisting superlatives, San Francisco is one of my favourite cities because it climbs hills while other cities spread out. It encourages its immigrants to retain their ethnic differences while other places assimilate them. It rejoices in a public transport system as archaic as Stephenson's Rocket. It bakes sourdough bread; and it is a launching pad projecting you towards Big Sur and a road south.

Monterey comes first, 120 miles from San Francisco; still a fishing town despite the goey things that happened to Sinatra a long time ago. I stayed the night there, eating clam chow-

der and abalone puffs at Rappa's on Old Fisherman's Wharf. The cabaret was terrific; a salty pride of sea-fishers made oink-oinking barks at a pelican demonstrating that its beak could hold more than its belly can.

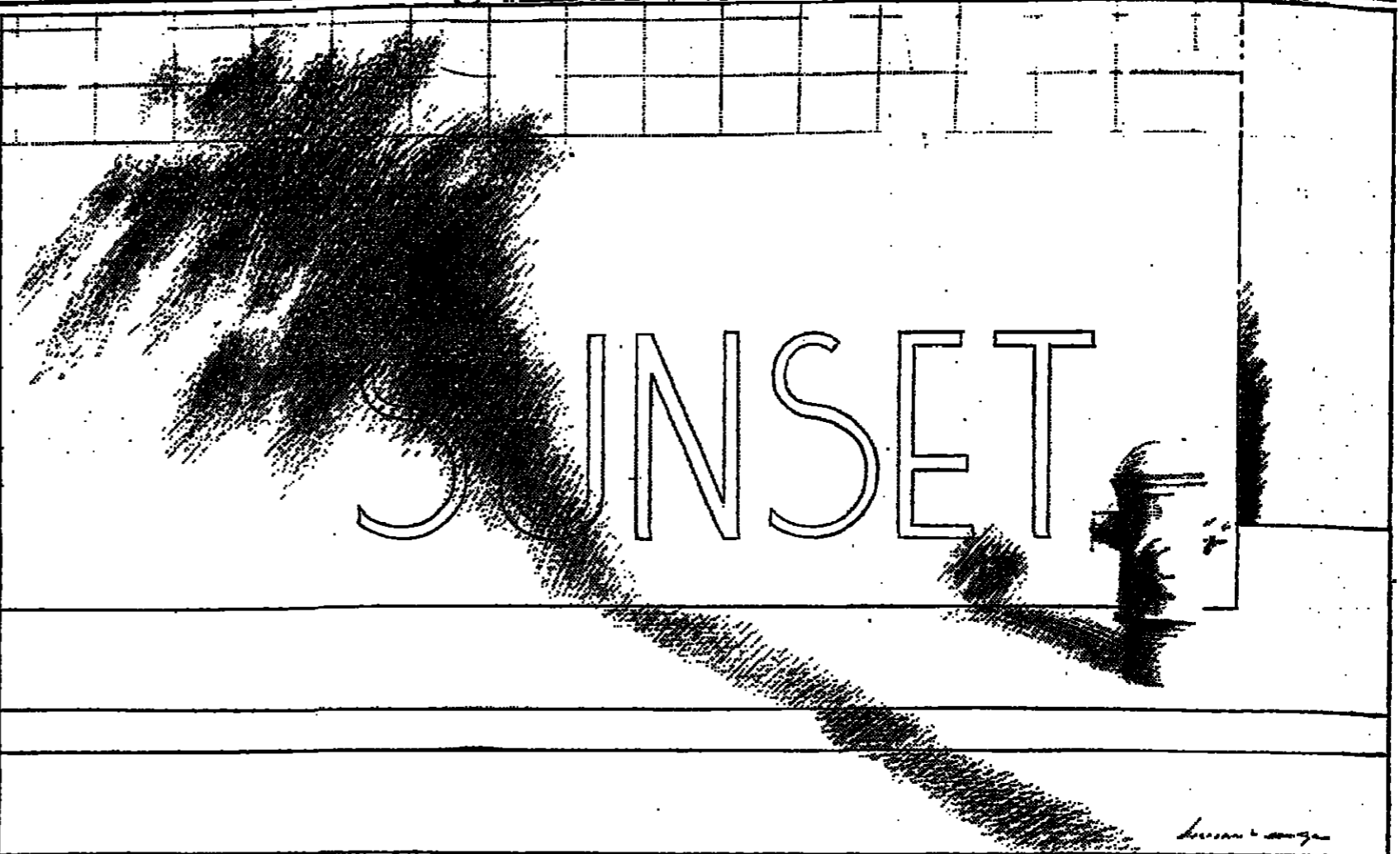
A storm had blocked the coastal road beyond Big Sur. So I made a labyrinthine detour, which took hours, but you can't board time at the expense of beauty - that would be like neglecting the Sistine Chapel because you had a bus to catch. You dare not take your eyes off this road, so perilous is it; yet you must. It is Cornhill through a magnifying glass, hugely cruel, elemental. It was shaped by a force more omnipotent even than William Randolph Hearst, who built a monument to himself, a shrine if you prefer, calling it La Cuesta Encantada, the Enchanted Hill - more brutally known as Hearst Castle.

'It is best to be anaesthetized'

Hearst, they say, was the model for Citizen Kane, who had a dark dream and constructed a monumental folly of another kind. Years ago I met a guide at the San Simeon castle who had been in service in Hearst's time. Her name was Milly; she had a face of almost serene vacancy and was possessed of a scalyham-type devotion for her master. Mr Hearst, she told me, was adorable; and there her case rested.

I could have made San Simeon so Los Angeles city limits that night, it's only 150 miles or so; but you need to steady yourself against the cultural shock waves of L.A. Exposing yourself too suddenly could lead to brain damage. So, like a penitent on the eve of revelation, I sought refuge at Morro Bay, savouring stiff ocean breezes and stiffer draughts of Jack Daniels. It is best to be numb, to be anaesthetized; for, if San Francisco welcomes you eagerly, Los Angeles greets you with snarl, with trombones and a hundred trendy expletives. LA survives through one cardinal rule: to be "with-it". Without-it is for the birds.

Los Angeles - indeed, every square inch of southern California - is mad, certifiably mad. And this palpable lunacy is



what, perversely no doubt, I like about the place. There is a dynamism in the air, a dynamism for freedom of expression; and if the formula contains lemming-like ingredients, then so be it.

There is a seismic certainty that California will detach itself from the American continent, drifting towards an even more enviable climate in the vicinity of Hawaii. And if the process is delayed too long, there is always the possibility that the Queen Mary, moored at Long Beach, could be commandeered as a towing agent. The future, you see, is insecure; one day the kissing will have to stop; if it's not Vietnam it will be Nicaragua, and if it's not Nicaragua some kid in Sacramento will bypass the computer circuit at the Pentagon.

There are 460 square miles of LA, every yard in perpetual motion, 50 suburbs in search of a city. Nothing is allowed to unwind, least of all people whom you imagine should be taking it easy by now. Like Christopher Isherwood, still perched above Santa Monica Canyon, I hadn't seen him in ages. He hasn't changed much, the same undimmed blue eyes, the same incongruous gleam of a prep-school boy opening his melon. He hasn't grown much either: he's a bit over 5ft, but not much.

The timing was better than with Jessica Mitford. "I'm off to New York tomorrow", he announced. "To collect some award worth \$16,000 - not to be

sniffed at", he added, sniffing. Isherwood first came with Auden in the 1930s but Auden felt California was "stagnant", so moved to New York, leaving his friend at MGM Studios, in company with Dorothy Parker.

"I think I'm 79", he said vaguely. "But I know I'm Californian. They don't ask where you're from, as long as you're yourself. There are few taboos - all that's required is to be different, dig up an act, like being British. Anyway, I'm running out of kith and kin in England."

I left him on the "deck" of the house on Adelaide Drive. We had been admiring the sunset, Isherwood flapping his arms against his chest as if to ward off the frost of northern England that got to his bones those years ago. "You know" he said, "Bobby Bowles was a real person." He looked like a satyr, jubilant, needing to surprise, yet wanting little else.

Certainly he wouldn't want a Rolls-Royce. I thought next day, "hunching" in Wilshire Boulevard with Anthony Thompson, President of Rolls-Royce Beverly Hills. Well, if Isherwood can do without a Rolls, there are 6,300 souls in the area to whom the vehicle is a necessity.

It's a way of showing quite conspicuously that you've won your laurels", Thompson said. "There's a natural respect for wealth here."

That evening the fare was more frugal. Bangers and mash and John Courage beer at Ye Olde Kings' Head on Santa Monica Boulevard. I ate with John Gordon, the English publican, and a girl called Geri Jean. "The extremes are all here", said John. "And everything in between. Fads, cults, trends, all begin here. Everybody is clawing at being somebody, their 60 seconds of fame. They're all writers or actors, or out-of-work actors saying 'But I'm up for a great role'. There's a mass identity crisis."

There is no identity crisis about the Queen Mary, aboard which I spent that night in a teak-panelled cabin, all art deco and foot-operated Shanks lavatories. She carried captains and kings, the Windsores, Churchill, Laurel and Hardy, Coward and Dietrich, crossing the Atlantic

in three days, 20 hours and 42 minutes, using up 30,000 eggs during the passage. But California is looking after her; she sits proud at the Long Beach quay, every inch a lady.

'Compete or keep a low profile'

Again, I took the long way to Palm Springs, out of LA through Pasadena, into the Mojave Desert, through the San Bernardino Mountains. It used up the whole day instead of two hours. I did it as a kind of purifying rite; and to remind myself that California is crumpled with raw beauty as well as frocks, funky-dunks and weirdos. And anyway, Palm Springs is something else. Seeing is believing.

Buildings do not rise higher than palm-tree height, deferring to the eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not cast a shadow over thy neighbour's swimming pool", of which, at last count, there was such a proliferation that you could swim every day for 14 years, two months and 15 days without using the same pool twice.

There are two choices in Palm Springs: compete or keep a low profile - very know, a closed mouth gathers no flies. The competition is strenuous: the Annenbergs, Fords, Bob Hope, Sinatra, Kirk Douglas, Patrick McNee. You'd have to join a country club of course; one like the Vintage, entrance fee \$40,000, provided you own a house on the property, upwards of half a million. You'd need to be seen as well, at charity benefits, such as the Temple Isaiah party, \$10,000 minimum a couple.

You would need a dress or two as well, and a ton of jewelry; and a ready line in witty gossip. "My dear, she's such a good housekeeper. Every time she gets divorced, she keeps the house."

They are even working on open-air conditioning, one restaurant, Las Casuelas, has it already. There is talk that entire streets will be air-conditioned, so that shopping for your essential Cartier, Hermès or groceries will be quite a treat in the 130°F summer temperatures. In Palm Springs, there is much concern with health, be pollen with royal jelly being

available on the supermarket shelves; bodies are being sensibly rejuvenated with spirulina plankton. Overnight octogenarians are turning into a scathing mass of hormones.

I stayed with my old chum Zukowksi, editor of *Palm Springs Life* magazine. "Let's play aphorisms", I suggested over a plateful of bean shoots. "How about living in Southern California guarantees the loss of a few IQ points a year?" she said. Seriously, on the surface, life here looks as easy as eating chocolate ice-cream. It's not. Like any place that extends a promise of instant fame and fortune, it's fraught with danger. The streets of Los Angeles, last frontier of the American dream, are paved with broken hearts.

Well, there's California for you, as meaningfully as I can manage. Polythene-wrapped and sanitized for your personal protection. God supplied this particular Big Apple as raw a fruit as in the whole orchard of Eden; it's just that Adam cultivated a few maggots.

Have a nice day.

Travel notes

1 New London-San Francisco-Los Angeles-London with Pan American Airways using the Pan Am Fly/Drive in conjunction with Alamo Rent-A-Car. The first-class return fare to either Los Angeles or San Francisco is £2226. The current Apex fare is £420.10 return. Pan Am's fly-drive deal includes a fare element of £400 (details in the new brochure). There is a free car rental scheme co-terminating between Jan 1 and March 31, 1984. Telephone 01-409 0688 for details. The Mark Hopkins Hotel, San Francisco, double room European £96-£126; Hotel Queen Mary, Long Beach, outside starooms £50-£59; Winston Churchill suite £183-£216. On the road in the United States I invariably use Travelodge (part of THF Hotels) who offer middle-of-the-road excellence at budget prices, £22-£36 for a double room - telephone bookings in London 01-587 3444 or toll-free in the United States on 800 255 3050. For dining exclusively at Ernie's (or similar) in San Francisco, allow £60-£70 for two; but two can eat modestly for £17-£27 with Continental wine. Mileage of the described journey 1,300 miles.

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Watchful eyes: Sightseers look across the bay from Fisherman's Wharf to the bleak prison fortress of Alcatraz

Scotching the rumours about the Italians

As another ski season opens, those who keep their eyes on the popularity stakes will have noticed that Austria has once again replaced Italy as the top of the league and become the most favoured destination among British skiers.

This reversal is a little curious, for when it comes to sheer quantity and variety of skiing, Italy far outpaces Austria, where the skiing, for all its excellence, does tend to be very much of a piece. If there is an answer, other than that fashions change, it is probably that British skiers find that the Austrians are serious about skiing, while the Italians are how can one put it - just a little laid back.

How much truth there is in

this feeling is hard to establish, but it is certainly more than a nasty rumour put about by the envious to do the Italians down.

Last winter, we arrived in the resort of Santa Caterina, to find that although the resort was open, the pistes were still unspiced. Someone had borrowed the Fiste Bully tractor to sharpen up some slope for a race. My lift ticket went into the electronic gate-slot all right, but it wouldn't come out again, and the idea of passing the morning tied by the neck to a turnstile isn't much of a turn-on.

I must say that our instructor was charming. With the amount of practice he put in he couldn't help but be charming. On the other hand, an hour's lesson which consisted of 10 minutes

skiing and 50 minutes standing about while he chatted to the female skiers, cooled both my feet and my admiration.

Down the road in Bormio, a very attractive resort, rightly popular with the British, the pistes were in very good condition, and we had a great morning's skiing until the stroke of noon. Then the lifts stopped and stayed stopped for nearly two hours, while all right-minded people stoked up on pasta. Unless, of course, you happened to be at the bottom of some far-distant slope and unable to get back. I'm all for a nice long lunch hour but I do so like to be told.

That little hiccup apart, Bormio is a great place for

skiing and gives the lie to those nasty rumours that the Italians buy their lift systems fifth-hand, probably from Bulgaria, and service them with several coats of paint. The lifts at Bormio were being serviced regularly, some all the time.

On to the bus then, and off across the pass, to Livigno. Livigno has one Great Good Thing and one Great Bad Thing. The Great Bad Thing is the six-hour transfer time from Milan Airport. The Great Good Thing is that the resort is duty free and therefore awash with cut-price liquor. The skiing takes place on the slopes on either side of the valley, and one has to decide each morning which side of the valley to ski on, for the two are not linked. There is said to be a shuttlebus which roves between the two, but our inquiries for this useful service produced only the response: "Domani". Domani has been rightly described as a word having much the same meaning as *mañana*, but without the same sense of urgency. Here too, someone had made off with the Fiste Bully.

Our return, by bus and train to Milan, was something of an odyssey. This was yet another surprise because Italy is the country where the trains are said to run on time, as indeed they do. The snag is that they are timed to arrive in any junction just five minutes after the onward connection has departed.

But let me not become sour. It is only fair to add that our visit was in mid-December, at the very start of the season, and no doubt as time went on it all perked up. Besides, the people were friendly, the resorts delightful, the prices less than painful, the food finger-lickin' good, and the sun shone.

Rob Neillands

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TRAVEL/2

Aloha, hula and goodbye to an Hawaiian odyssey

By 4.30am on the first day the jet lag had won. Unable to sleep, I wandered out onto the terrace of my hotel bedroom and gazed out on Waikiki Beach, that most famous of Pacific resorts. Sixteen floors below the waves rolled in endlessly, I had imagined the surf would be enormous and the noise thunderous, but apparently this was the wrong season. All around the lights of the massive hotel and condominium blocks winked conspiratorially. As I stood breathing in the light sub-tropical night air, I found it hard to believe I was halfway round the world in the middle of the world's biggest ocean.

The journey to Hawaii had been horrendous despite the comforts of the 747, London to San Francisco - 10 hours 45 minutes, three hour stopover; then five and a half hours San Francisco to Honolulu. Add transfers and it's 24 hours door-to-door. And then there's the 12-hour time loss.

Somewhat, the islands confirm your worst fears and answer your wildest dreams. Waikiki on the island of Oahu is smart, rich and expensive. The beachside hotels stretch endlessly along a surprisingly narrow strip of sand. Behind the main beach road lies a series of multi-storey shopping precincts selling anything from Carrier jewelry to native carvings and fast food. It is the American dream transported thousands of sea miles to a group of 20 volcanic islands and atolls, once inhabited by Polynesians who did not know the meaning of sin until American missionaries told them what it was.

Sight seeing begins on the beach. All around on that over-exposed strip, enormous whale-like Americans lie recumbent on the sun casting a shadow over slender Japanese neighbours. Gorgeous blondes, male and female, natural and dyed, soak up the ultra-violet. Tanning is a serious business here; outside many of the hotels there are Tanning Information Cent-

ers where earnest bronzed youths discuss which cream or lotion to use and how many hours of sun to take on the first day. All shades of colour and race are there. Hawaii claims to be the world's most poly-racial society.

Captain Cook sailed at that time he discovered the islands on January 18 1778. The carefree people, far from being terrified, extended the traditional aloha (literally an affectionate greeting) and welcomed the sailors with open arms. Cook became revered as a god and named the group the Sandwich Islands. A year later he got involved in a little local difficulty and lost his godlike status and his life in an extremely bloody scene on the beach near the now-famous Diamond Head.

Feast of exotic flora and fauna

The great captain left two legacies - trade links with the rest of the civilized world and syphilis, measles and other common ailments that reduced the islands' population from 300,000 in 1780 to 70,000 by 1851. Forty years after Captain Cook life changed again. The kilijoy American missionaries arrived and made the slanders wear clothes, abandon love, their religion and an idea of keeping the islands to themselves. Wave after wave of different nationalities, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Samoan, Korean, have subsequently contributed to the miscegenation of the Hawaiians.

Tearing myself away from gazing with instant awe in my heart at some of the more exotic creatures on the beach, I turned to the other attractions of Oahu. Beaches, tepid sea, ski diving, exotic flowers, trees and the American military abound. Pearl Harbor, home of the US Pacific Fleet and to USS Arizona Memorial, a moving tribute to the men killed on that infamous day when the Japa-

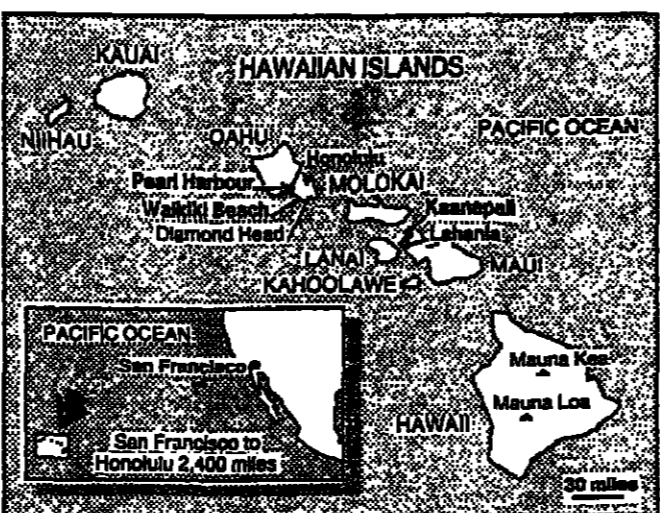
nese Zero fighters roared out of the sun to wreak havoc on an unsuspecting nation. The mandatory Chinatown (Soho's is far more interesting). Enticing cocktails and a friendly but ruthless determination to make you enjoy spending a lot of money very quickly. And of course the incredibly erotic hula dancers.

Three nights later I was not sorry to leave Oahu and head on to some of the other islands. Being American the inter-island air services are fast and efficient. Kauai, the garden isle, has a far smaller population than Oahu (40,000 to 720,000) and despite the modern conveniences it begins to approach my idea of a Pacific island.

On again to Maui, second largest of the islands, created by two massive volcanoes providing spectacular scenery and beauty. I would like to come back here. The town of Lahaina, formerly the royal capital of Hawaii, has been restored and looks as it did 200 years ago when the whaling fleets of the world used it as a convenient and welcoming base. Clapboard houses line its main street, but the shops sell 25 varieties of burger or pizzas now.

The town is conveniently close to the very swish resort of Kaanapali. Luxurious beachside hotels which offer everything from art galleries to hairdressers to delicatessens and ice cream parlours have sprung up here in recent years. Enterprising architects have utilized the attractions of the jungle vegetation and built some of the lobbies around soaring palm trees, fragrant plumeria, frangipani, jacarandas and African tulip trees.

The food and drink in the hotels comes in two varieties - fast food and milk-shakes. American children of all ages love them, and French-American, familiar sounding, gourmet dishes which deceive the eye when served up as giant Texas steaks with a thick packet gravy on top. Steer clear of the French wines; like Europeans they



don't travel here well. The Californian produce, especially the Robert Mondavi wines, suit the atmosphere and ambience better.

The whole act is smart. The tourist is cosseted and protected from the outside world. The climate never seems to vary, never gets cold and the shower works every time! An obvious parallel can be drawn with the Caribbean. The weather, beaches and climate are similar but the underlying tension that persists on so many Caribbean islands is absent here. You are not advised to stick to the hotel grounds and you don't come across hate-wielding security men keeping the population at bay. Even the prices are not too dissimilar. Perhaps the only drawback is the over-rigid American efficiency of it all.

Refreshed and restored after two days in Maui, I continued my odyssey. Another short flight this time to the big island itself, Hawaii. If Maui provides the relaxation, the big island provides the spectacle. It was formed by five volcanoes of which two, Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea, are nearly 14,000ft high and still very active. They descend 18,000ft below the island to the seabed, making them the largest mountains on earth.

It is a curious feeling knowing this when landing on the island. With typical ingenuity and business acumen, the state has built a highway right up to the crater of Mauna Loa. The tourist buses stop outside an hotel and the Volcano Art

Edited by Shous Crawford Poole

COLLECTING

Wax works thrown into relief

Taste changes mysteriously from year to year, decade to decade and century to century. One of the most significant movements present is a steady upward swing in appreciation of sculpture. Paintings, drawings and prints are still far more expensive than their three-dimensional counterparts, but the gap is beginning to narrow, and the trend seems to be affecting prices across the range of three-dimensional art, from Renaissance bronzes to Victorian sculpture, Rodin and Henry Moore.

One three-dimensional area which has so far been left almost entirely unnoticed by collectors is modelling in wax. A technique first used in ancient Egypt and popular in classical times, its flowering in Europe began with the Renaissance. Genuine Renaissance models still pass through the sale rooms at around £400 to £700, although exceptional examples can go to around £4,000.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century there was another great vogue for the medium, most especially for wax portraits in low or high relief. These are reminiscent of the silhouettes so popular at this period but are much more sophisticated and beautiful. They can be found at £20 to £30, while £300 or so should secure a fine one.

Three reference books (vital in steering a course through the

rocky seas of collecting) are available, all by Edward Pyke. First came the *Biographical Dictionary of Wax Modellers* (Oxford University Press, 1973). When Mr Pyke decided in 1981 to publish a supplement incorporating new discoveries, the OUP turned him down, so he published it himself. And this month he publishes a second supplement. It will cost £9.50 plus postage and is available from Mr Pyke, 53 Ladbroke Road, London W11.

With charming candour Mr Pyke reveals in his publicity leaflet for this supplement the state of play on the other two volumes: the OUP are still left with 70 copies of the original dictionary; Mr Pyke himself is left with around half the 500 copies he had printed of the first supplement. After a slow start, the books could well turn into collectors' items themselves as the three-dimensional boom gets under way!

Mr Pyke has devoted his retirement to this work. (He retired in 1963 from the Royal National Institute for the Blind, where he had invented and developed braille "printing". He inherited a small collection of waxes from his father and has added to it himself. It currently decorates the walls of his sitting-room. The pieces are mainly small.

The star of the collection is by Samuel Percy (1750-1820), a three-quarter length portrait of

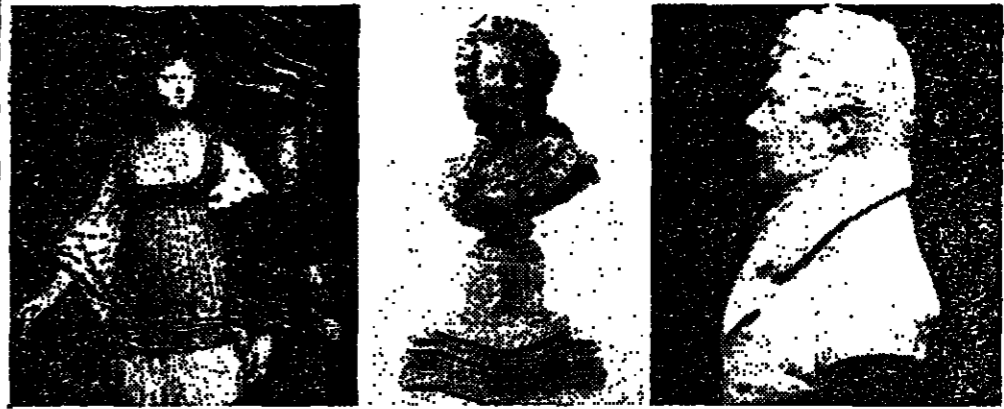
Princess Charlotte framed by a red wax curtain. It depicts the Prince Regent's daughter who would have been queen of England had she not died in childbirth in 1817. She is palpatingly lovely, with softly flushed wax cheeks and a tell tale swelling at the waist of her green and gold wax dress, proving that the portrait was executed in 1817. A Percy was left unsold at Sotheby's last year at £280.

Percy is one of the top names of the period. Another is Isaac Gosset, who generally did head-and-tinted wax. Both were prolific and can be bought quite easily. The same goes for Caspar Hardy, of Cologne, who was their contemporary and modelled little genre scenes as well as portraits.

The most abundantly available of the Renaissance modelers is Antonio Abondio (1539-1591), an expert portraitist who worked for the Emperor Maximilian. Another Italian whose works can be found quite easily is Gaetano Zumbo (1656-1701), who worked in Bologna and specialized in rather grisly anatomical and religious scenes.

Sadly, the popularity of waxes at the turn of the century brought a good many fakes into existence, and it is wise to take advice before spending large sums. And don't hang them over the central heating, because wax melts.

Geraldine Norman



Heading for popularity: Percy's Princess Charlotte; bust by Leconte; the Rev R. Aspland by Poole

DRINK

Potent Christmas survival kit

If you are filled with horror by the thought that this time next week you will be coping with a house full of over-excited children and difficult elderly relations in addition to making the mince pies, stuffing the turkey and wrapping up those last-minute Christmas presents, take heart. The one way to make certain that the festive fortnight passes by in a blissful blur is to lay in sufficient stocks of the perfect Christmas survival kit - wine.

It may be too late by now to persuade your local wine merchant to deliver, but the choice at your nearest off-licence or supermarket will still be sufficiently wide to cope with all those taxing festivities.

Everyone uses Christmas as an excuse to drop by unannounced on the simplest method of entertaining them is to ensure that your fridge and sideboard are already well-stocked with bottles. A screw-top bottle of the peachy, honied Muscat de Beaumes de Venise (Sainsbury's £4.25) can be kept in the fridge throughout the holiday; a chilled glass served with mince pies mid-morning or mid-afternoon always goes down well, especially with maiden aunts, the vicar and friends with sweet teeth.

For those with drier and more demanding tastes, a good bottle of any pungent, nutty, bone-dry Sercial such as Lomelino's Sercial (Russell & Meyer, The Rectory, St Mary at Hill, London EC3, £6.85); this fortified wine can also stay in the fridge for days without coming to any harm.

If space in your fridge is at a premium, try one of these Christmas sideboard standbys: Gonzalez Byass has an excellent old bottled sherry in their rich, sweet, old Oloroso - Matusalem - which is perfect with Christmas pudding or at tea-time with the cake if you are finding your relations especially hard work (La Vigneronne, 105 Old Brompton Road, London SW7, £5.60). Cherry brandy is another old favourite that warms everyone up after church and also makes a good warming noggin for carol singers and hunt-followers. (Oddbins, £4.70).

On the big day itself the quickest way of making Christmas feel like Christmas is to start with champagne. Sainsbury's flowery and full-bodied Dry Champagne (£5.95) came top in *The Times* recent champagne tasting and would make a splendid morning tipple. A cheap alternative would be to buy a bottle of Cuvée de Fraises de Bois (Cullens £3.95), pour a teaspoonful into the bottom of each glass and top it up with the cheapest, driest, sparkling wine that you can get at your off-licence. It produces a delicious pale pink sparkling wine with a bouquet of wild strawberries.

Relatives and friends always seem to turn up late on Christmas Day, so an aperitif that can double up as a first-course wine is a good idea. That tangy Lomelino Sercial would be ideal, for it is a perfect match for a soup or any other starter. If you would prefer not to lead off with a fortified wine or are starting with a delicate fish dish that you feel would be swamped by madeira, Marks & Spencer



have the answer - a glorious, rich, green, buttery '81 Chablis from Rémy le Fort, a bargain at just £3.99.

It always seems rather a pity to serve good claret or burgundy with turkey; the meat itself is not difficult to match but few wines can survive the rigours of cranberry sauce, strong herb stuffings and the like. The Rhône is a good source of those robust red wines that can and

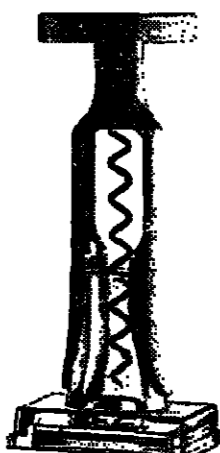
Tesco's up-and-coming wine department have a smashing rich, spicy and stylish single domaine '81 Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Les Arnevels from J. R. Quiot, that could easily handle the festive bird and trimmings as well as the stilton. It is also priced at a temptingly low £3.99.

If you feel like going to the other extreme and splashing out on a superb wine that none of your guests will have ever tasted before then the intense grassy, blackcurrant fruit of Tasmania's splendid '81 Moorilla Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is a worthwhile indulgence. (Les Amis du Vin, 7 Ariel Way, Wood Lane, London W12, £12.55).

Christmas pudding served with brandy butter is another hopelessly difficult festive dish to match with wine; that old bottled sherry, Matusalem, could just about cope, as could Blandy's Ten Year Old Madeira, with its rich, soft, raisin charms (Hedges & Butler, 153 Regent Street, London, SW1 £9.50).

Jane MacQuitty

Herbert Allen perfected the corkscrew by inventing Screwpull



Wine connoisseur and president of one of America's biggest engineering companies, he put his brilliant brain to improving the corkscrew. The result is acclaimed the world over and because it is patented, it cannot be copied. Broken, crumbled and "awkward-to-pull" corks are now things of the past.

What the experts say -

"The Screwpull comes closer to infallibility than any other device for extracting corks" TERRY ROBARDS, NEW YORK TIMES

"Once you have used the Screwpull you will never use another corkscrew" MICHAEL BROADBENT, CHRISTIES, LONDON

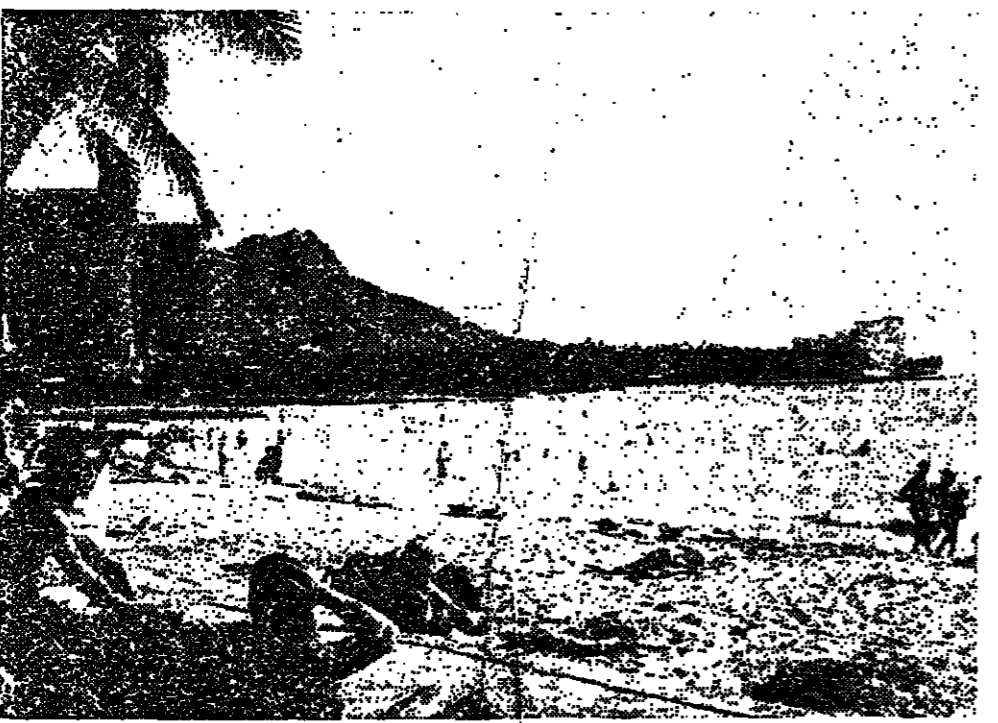
"Must be the best corkscrew invented this century" DEREK COOPER, OBSERVER MAGAZINE

"What wine lovers have been waiting 300 years for" PAUL MARKS, WINE TIDINGS, MONTREAL

"Absolutely idiot proof" WILLIAM HALL, FINANCIAL TIMES

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Business as usual: Diamond Head looms behind the extraordinarily narrow strip of Waikiki beach

Manorial mystery with a happy twist

Who would have solved the murder of Castle Combe? Would it have been Miss Marple, invited, fortuitously, by some long-lost friend to stay in this suspiciously pretty limestone village in north Wiltshire? Or Hercule Poirot, called in by Battle of the Yards to pose as a guest at the manor house, where we ourselves were staying for the weekend?

The manor house, let me explain, is now an hotel and lies just a minute's walk from the market cross of Castle Combe, which has been called the prettiest village in England. The cross still bears the grooves where the medieval bowmen sharpened their arrows. There is a convivial village pub, a babbling village brook, the Bye, and within the picturesque village church lies the thirteenth-century tomb of Sir Walter de Dunstanville, who built the castle, now defunct. The hotel is mostly seventeenth and eighteenth century and with its oak-panelled walls and enormous open fireplace it is every inch the scene of a Christie crime - Styles, perhaps, or Chimmneys. In the lounge an Italian frieze 200 years old commemorates Shakespeare's Falstaff, who may have been based on Sir John Fastolf, Lord



Ideal setting: the picturesque village of Castle Combe

of Castle Combe and friend of Bolingbroke. There are circular staircases and beamed ceilings; and in the 26 acres of garden and parkland surrounding the house we joined the marriage and pheasants for a walk among hedges and hick with old man's beard and white bryony.

It was a magnificent place to stay, but we had an ulterior motive for our visit. It was the night of the Alsatian Banquet.

Allow me to paint the scene in Dame Agatha's colours; the guests gathered in the dining hall with its flickering candles and huge landings, sizing one another up; Oliver Clegg, owner of the hotel, looking every inch the lord of the manor in his immaculate white dinner jacket, placing his guests with gentlemanly skill; and in the kitchen Marc Decker, the young Alsatian guest chef, putting the finishing touches to his salmon and scallop salad, tasting the sauce greticte, flavouring with celery his oyster and mussel chowder, choosing his time....

Course after course we ate, each more succulent than the last. Snails in puff pastry with Pernod, herbs and cream; a mousse of trout and crayfish; a succulent sorbet; lamb in fresh basil butter sauce; and of the five wines only the (excellent) Châteauneuf-du-Pape was at all suspicious, for it alone did not come from Alsace.

For most, gluttony. For some, curiosity. But what of the flamboyant Dutchman buying doubles while his wife sat by the fire, silently reading her *Horse and Hounds*? And what to make of the overheard phrase: "There's evil at the heart of this village?"

We spent the night in a four-poster bed and from our huge windows there were good English views next morning over manicured lawns and woodlands beyond. Coffee, the Sunday papers, breakfast and a five-mile hike set us up for an English lunch of which even Marc Decker, now released from his labours, approved. There was no crime at Castle Combe that weekend, but I think we discovered its secret. The place, quite simply, has style.

Peter Brown



The wings we drank were from the House of Dopff and Iron, of Alsace, and were shipped by J. B. Rymner, of London. Marc Decker is employed by Dopff and Iron. The Major House Hotel, one of the Best Western group, lies between the M4 and the A420, six miles from Chippenham, a two and a half hour drive from London. A four-poster double bedroom is normally £24 a night, a single room £20, but winter breaks can be taken until April 1984, at £25 per person for a no-night stay, dinner included. Tel 0245 782206.

Languedoc's legacy of little English pies

There are about 6,000 Pizenais, as the inhabitants of Pèzenas are called, and they are proud of their town. When Cardinal de Bernis, Prince de Conti, lived there it was called the Versailles of Languedoc. That seems to be going rather far, though they did have a bright young actor-manager there in those days, Molière. The courtyards of the gentlemen's houses in the Renaissance quarter make good open-air theatres.

The old part, going back to the Middle Ages, is almost unspoilt. The streets are too narrow for serious traffic, and one can spend a happy afternoon strolling around. A few arty-crafty shops have sprung up, open only in summer, but most of the tourists from Tokyo and Düsseldorf press on in their air-conditioned coaches to Carcassonne, that Disneyland of Viollet-le-Duc.

The main road goes through the nineteenth-century quarter, and the average motorist is ignorant of the treasure hidden two minutes' walk away. Until a few years ago drivers were preoccupied with the famous Pèzenas traffic jam, which the inhabitants would bring out their chairs to watch - for this in the road to the Costa Brava. They have lost this source of amusement since the motorway was finished, so they turn their chairs the other way and watch the game of *tambourin*.

This is played on a 100yd-long car-park, and is a sort of five-side tennis without a net. The rackets are like big tambourines without bells. The solid rubber ball makes a most satisfying clonk when a master-player sends it high into the air. In France the game is played only in a 25-mile radius of Pèzenas, but some parts of Italy know it too, and every year there is an international match.

On the outskirts there are some agreeable châteaux. One of them, Loubatières, was the favourite hunting-lodge on Nînon de Lenclous, that elegant pin-up of the seventeenth century. A later visitor was the

you; *malhîni* - a stranger; *moana* - ocean; *muumu* - long; shapeless and highly coloured frock used by most Hawaiian women; *pau* - finished; *pupu* - Hawaiian hors d'oeuvre; *wikikiki* - hurry up.

Shopping: *Muumus* (see above); bright and often garish aloha shirts; woven carvings; ceramics; lava products; perfumes from native flowers such as plumeria, gardenia, pikake or ginger; table mats and baskets made from coconut fibres; grass skirts and lava lavas (wrapped cotton skirts).

Package deals: I asked Hawaiian and American Dream Holidays to cost a package based on my experiences - Apex mid-week economy flight by Pan Am, London to Honolulu return, including all inter-island flights and transfers with two nights at the Sheraton Sheraton Maui, two nights at the Sheraton Hilton on Hawaii and one night at the Plaza Hotel, Waikiki.

Local phrases: "Hany loose" means keep calm and is used at the end of nearly any statement; *haole* - white man; *holoholo* - to visit; *imu* - underground ovens for roasting pigs in for a *luau* - an Hawaiian feast; *Kahuna* - priest or doctor; *Kamama* - member of the long-standing island family; *kana* - a man; *keep out*; *lei* - garland of flowers; *mahele* - thank

Cardinal de Bernis, known to readers of Casanova's memoirs as having been broad-minded about sharing the favours of the beautiful nuns M. M. and C. C. in nights of Venetian frolic.

Clive of India rented another of these châteaux in 1766 for a spell of rest and recuperation, and - to come to the point - left his mark on Pèzenas in a strange and durable way.

There are a lot of pastry-shops in the town. In their windows, among the fruit tarts and éclairs, there are things that look like small pork pies. They are the shape of cotton-reels, a couple of inches high and a half in diameter, and are called *petits pâtés de Pèzenas*. They are meant to be eaten warm, at the beginning of a meal. The outside is made of hot-water raised-pie pastry. The filling is four parts soft brown sugar, two parts minced mutton, one part mutton suet, one part beef suet and some grated lemon peel.

Yes, it's the original English mince pie, somewhat simplified. Our 1891 Mrs Beeton wants you to include some lean beef, raising the mince, and some peas or currants, candied which people are beginning to prefer a meatless pie, to be served as a pudding or for tea. Later editions only give the familiar decadent version, with no nourishing mutton fat.

Milord Clive brought his own cook with him to Pèzenas, gave tasty suppers to the locals, and started a tradition. His little English pie, in 200 years, has not spread further afield than the *tambourin* district, where, however, it is difficult to avoid.

A good place, Pèzenas. As for its speciality, which left England two centuries ago to resurface in the pastry-shops of the Cours Jean-Jaures, the town's tourist leaflet can have the last word: "The taste of the *petits pâtés* will astound the gastronome."

They're dead right. John P. Harris The French Tourist Office is at 779 Piccadilly, London W1 (488 2448).

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VALUES/Beryl Downing on gifts with lasting value

Investment in a present with a future

The cost of giving often has nothing whatever to do with the price. Some of the least expensive and most enchanting presents are the result of hours of consideration...

Wisdom of choosing pearls

In the past 13 years pearls have increased in value more than diamonds, according to Mikimoto, the originators of the cultured pearl. A strand which cost £25 in 1970 would cost £200 today and Mikimoto can show you every size in every colour...

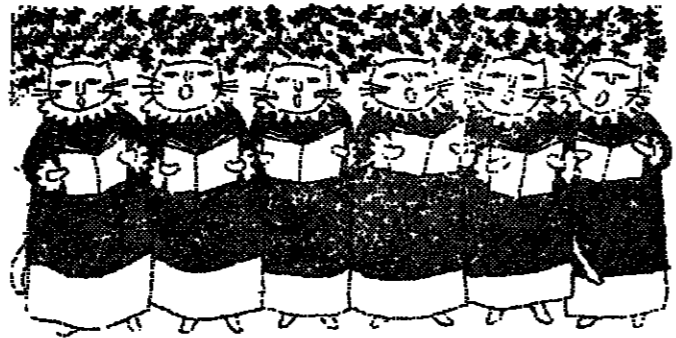
Investing in modern jewelry means selecting a highly individual style that has more to offer than passing fashion.

Textiles full of Eastern promise

Since the price of genuine Persian rug has become prohibitive collectors are looking at other oriental textiles and particularly at the collections shown by Joss Graham at 10 Eccleston Street, London SW1.

A picture of abstraction

I first saw Judy Sale's pictures at John Cullen's lighting studio at 1 Woodfall Court, Smith Street, London SW3. The power of the large, swirling abstract oils with a feeling of sky or sea or sand made an immediate impact...



Carolling cats: Miniature etching 'The First Noel' by Maggie Burley from Grafitik £18.40 plus 50p p & p

Already popular in Canada and America, she has only had one exhibition in this country. When she becomes better known, prices, which now range from £300 to £1,000, are bound to rise...

Liberty's enchanting Victorian Christmas Emporium in the basement offers beautiful period lace by Lunns Antiques, fine antique oriental embroideries collected by Marilyn Garwood...

Charlotte Campbell-Davies is so incensed at the outrageous prices charged for prints of no investment value at all that she has started to sell original paintings from her own house at 42 Jubilee Place, London SW3 (01-352 1203).

There is a finite number of such prints, so in a few years they will be even more difficult to find. In the meantime the Japanese Print Shop is at Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 (01-734 1234).

Discriminating buyers don't necessarily have to spend a great deal in order to get a good investment. An exhibition at postage-stamp to postcard size, prices from £5 to £30. Frames available on the spot.



Flower boxes and glass globes

Collectors of boxes will not be able to resist the exhibition at Argenta Gallery, 82 Fulham Road, London SW3 (01-584 1841). Richard Kell, whose work is new to the gallery, makes superbly crafted jewel boxes in African blackwood...

Matthew Warwick's boxes are already collector's pieces. Particularly ingenious is the one shown below (left), made in apple. It has a removable stalk containing a miniature jigsaw of an apple tree...



The left costs £195. The convolvulus (third from left) has a moonstone 'dewdrop' and contains a silver thimble (£225). Modern glass is one of the most exciting and rapidly developing crafts...

Investment objects specifically for men are difficult, unless they are collectors and then you run the danger of duplication. But cricketers might like the reissue of the plate commemorating W. G. Grace's 'firsts' - 1,000 runs and 100 centuries...

Or invest in a little style with Cartier's new Must fountain pen. In burgundy lacquer and gold plate it costs £155 from Cartier, 175 New Bond Street, London W1 (01-493 6962).

Search of silver linings. Serious collectors with investment-size bank balances will do their shopping in Bond Street, Francis and Toni Raeymaekers, at 2 Old Bond Street, London W1. Offer early and rare English silver as well as Georgian and Victorian pieces...

S. & J. Phillips at 139 New Bond Street, London W1, are specialists in antique silver, jewelry and objets d'art. Established in 1860 and still owned by the same family, the company has one of the finest collections in the world of eighteenth-century snuff boxes.

Christmas crammers that hate the cold. A symbol of Christmas, the poinsettia, is available in large numbers in shops and garden centres at this time of year. And it sometimes seems that there are few homes that don't have one to brighten their hall.

Pool hygiene. Unless you have taken the precaution of netting your garden pool during the autumn, now is the time to remove any fallen leaves from it, including any that have sunk to the bottom...

Winter wonder. The big sorbus family of trees varies from medium to quite large sizes. They are nearly all interesting and of good value for the garden. For the cornus-sorbus, the flowers have been formed and are open when they need to be kept moist but never wet.

Vigorous vines. Outdoor vines are more popular now than they have been for many years and they may be grown equally well under glass. Pruning, which may take place between mid-December and mid-January, is the same whether the vines are indoors or out.

Decorative tricks to turn the table into a feast for the eye. Christmas is the time to take more than usual trouble to make the table look attractive. But there's no need for it to become a chore, or cost the earth.

Basics first: decide on the overall colour scheme for the table. Cracked, flowers, candles and so on, one which compliments your best dinner service. Gold, silver, white, dark green and red are the traditional colours...

Keep the same colours and the same theme throughout. Designer Pam Woods has used flowers and bows like those in her traditional centrepiece (immediate right) to glamorize an inexpensive cracker and an unusually-folded napkin.

of appeal. You may be full of turkey and Christmas pudding, but there is usually room for the odd sweet or piece of fruit. Cookery broadcaster and writer Mary Berry always has a pyramid of satsumas or tangerines on show. She uses a white and gold Sevres cake stand - a family heirloom - but any plain white stand would do.

Neat Napkin. An attractively folded napkin like the one illustrated here is very quick and easy to do. Although it looks best if you use linen napkins, large thick paper ones will create almost the same effect.

Put the fruits into paper sweet-cases, pile on a stand or plate, or put them into a basket lined with tissue paper and decorated with sprigs of holly.

Pam Woods' table centre (far left) is made from two cut lampshade rings with red Offray velvet tubing threaded on them, arranged at right angles. Bows made from 22mm-wide red Offray picot-edge taffeta ribbon hold the rings in place.

Put the middle centrepiece (Price's Chelsea perfume candle set) at various heights on a silver gallery tray, combined with green and black grapes and leaves. The candles, in 15 fragrances cost £1.09 and £2.65.

IN THE GARDEN

Beauty bush and eye paint on the side

The Times Garden Project in Fulham, west London, enters its fifth month with the selection of some colourful border shrubs and stable roses.

Most of the planting in the back borders has been done, and it is now a question of completing the twigside shrubberies. It is in these beds that colour and variety can be introduced.

Others equally as good. Hydrangeas are good summer shrubs, producing in masses of flowers once established and growing well. Hibiscus syriacus is a hardy hibiscus and well worth a spot in any garden.

Poncirus trifoliata, the Japanese Bitter Orange, produces small orange-like fruits in the autumn. Sweetly scented white flowers precede the fruits.

Back to roses, for garden decoration, prefer the floribundas and these are many and varied. Choosing colours is bound to be a matter for personal taste, but a few to consider would be: Eye Paint, which has single scarlet flowers with a white eye; Trumpeter, with orange-scarlet flowers.

Dearest, which is a beautiful shade of pink; Korona, in my opinion the best yellow; Arthur Bell, which opens yellow but pales to cream with age; and Iceberg and Isis, two good whites.

Once planting has been completed, it will be necessary to fork over the ground and make sure the plants are all secure. A mulch of organic matter will then be desirable to help retain moisture in the ground and keep down competition from weeds.

Colourz can be supplied by the Hardy Fuchsias, Mrs Popple or F Riccardi are tried and tested. At there are many

Ashley Stephenson



Poinsettia drawing by Jill Field

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Winter wonder. The big sorbus family of trees varies from medium to quite large sizes. They are nearly all interesting and of good value for the garden.

Vigorous vines. Outdoor vines are more popular now than they have been for many years and they may be grown equally well under glass.

Decorative tricks to turn the table into a feast for the eye. Christmas is the time to take more than usual trouble to make the table look attractive.

Basics first: decide on the overall colour scheme for the table. Cracked, flowers, candles and so on, one which compliments your best dinner service.

Keep the same colours and the same theme throughout. Designer Pam Woods has used flowers and bows like those in her traditional centrepiece.

of appeal. You may be full of turkey and Christmas pudding, but there is usually room for the odd sweet or piece of fruit. Cookery broadcaster and writer Mary Berry always has a pyramid of satsumas or tangerines on show.

Neat Napkin. An attractively folded napkin like the one illustrated here is very quick and easy to do. Although it looks best if you use linen napkins, large thick paper ones will create almost the same effect.

Put the fruits into paper sweet-cases, pile on a stand or plate, or put them into a basket lined with tissue paper and decorated with sprigs of holly.

Pam Woods' table centre (far left) is made from two cut lampshade rings with red Offray velvet tubing threaded on them, arranged at right angles.

Put the middle centrepiece (Price's Chelsea perfume candle set) at various heights on a silver gallery tray, combined with green and black grapes and leaves.

Decorative tricks to turn the table into a feast for the eye. Christmas is the time to take more than usual trouble to make the table look attractive.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'Glimpse the m a master' and 'Man wit is back'.

REVIEW Video cassettes

Glimpses behind the mask of a master clown

For once we have a subject that video does proud. Not only are most of the best Chaplin films available on cassette...

The Gentleman Tramp (1974, 72 mins)/Sunnyside (1919, 18 mins) PolyGram, £33 Unknown Chaplin (1983, 156 mins) Thorn EMI, £37.50

with a treasure-house of rushes, out-takes, complete sequences shot, cut but never used, and home movies.

What emerges from their expert compilation is a surprising endorsement of Edison's view that genius is one per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration.

Peter Waymark



Chaplin and his leading lady Cherrill: He fired and rehired her during the shooting of City Lights

Graphic designs on the birds and bees

Most aspects of life are already covered by video. So it may come as no surprise that you can now learn to hatch and match, though not, as yet, to dispatch.

Learning to Love with Marje Proops (60 mins) Video Space, £19.95 Having a Baby (108 mins) BBC Video, £41.95

Diversions for the armchair critics

For ballet lovers video has one immediate attraction. The view from an armchair is a lot more comfortable and less obstructed than that from an orchestra stall.

Dr Coppellus (90 mins) Precision Video, £40.99 La Fille mal gardée (98 mins) Thorn EMI, £37.50

With Romeo and Juliet one would rather have another ballet. This one, restaged for filming by Patricia Foy at the Palazzo della Sport with the cast from La Scala, Milan, if Rudolf Nureyev's production with his self-serving choreography.

Robin Young

Next week: Video round-up of 1983

PREVIEW Theatre

Man with the gravelly voice is back where he belongs

Tommy Trinder celebrates 62 years in show business by returning to the familiar world of pantomime in Aladdin at the Shaftesbury Theatre.

A couple of weeks ago, he returned to his stand-up comedian routine at the Royal Festival Hall during an evening in aid of the Police Benevolent Fund.

Clare Colvin



Tommy Trinder: The trouper with the tribby in new headgear

THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY The Pit (828 8795) In repertory (but on by itself from now to Dec 24)

BIRMINGHAM: Repertory Theatre (021 236 4455). Toad of Toad Hall, by A. A. Milne with music by H. Fraser Simson. Opens Fri at 7.30pm. Until Feb 11, Mon-Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 8pm; matinee some days at 2.30pm or 4pm.

Critics' choice PACK OF LIES Lyric (437 3685) Mon-Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 8pm and 8.15pm; matinee Wed at 3pm

NOTTINGHAM: Playhouse (0602 419419). The Gondoliers by Gilbert & Sullivan. Until Jan 7, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm (no perf Dec 24 or Jan 2); matinee Dec 26, 28, 29, Jan 2 at 2.30pm

7.15pm. In repertory with Jean Seberg by Marvin Hamlisch, Christopher Adler, Julian Barry (Tales from Hollywood by Christopher Hampton (Mon at 7.15pm, Tues at 2pm and 7.15pm)

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PREVIEW Galleries

RAOUL DUFY Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (828 2144). Until Feb 5, Mon-Wed 10am-6pm, Thurs-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun non-6pm

THE GENIUS OF VENICE 1500-1600 Royal Academy, Piccadilly, London W1 (734 9052). Until Mar 11, daily 10am-6pm

POLITE SOCIETY BY ARTHUR DEVIS National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2 (330 1523). Until Jan 23, Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2-6pm

NIGHT TRICK Stilla Gallery, 58 High Street, Edinburgh (031-657 1140). Until Jan 7, Tues-Sat 12.30-5pm

RAIL IMAGES Royal Photographic Society, The Octagon, Milnston Street, Bath (0225 62841). Wed until Feb 4, Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm

graces in the eighteenth century. Also (until Jan 8) pictures by William Dobson, the leading British-born portrait painter of the seventeenth century.

NATURAL HISTORY IN ART Eyre and Hobbhouse, 39 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1 (930 5308). Until Dec 23, Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm

GODDESSES Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London W14 (833 4535). Until Dec 31, Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sun 2-5pm

A VANISHED WORLD Ben Ruri Gallery, 21 Dean Street, London W1 (01-437 2822). Until Dec 29, Mon-Fri 10.30am-6.30pm, Thur 10.30am-7.30pm

photographing the Jews of Eastern Europe. Of the 16,000 photographs he took only 2,000 survived; 50 are in this exhibition.

Dance

TWYLA THARP Sadler's Wells (278 8916). Today and Mon - Thurs at 7.30pm Casual-looking, individual, stimulatingly different dance works by a genius of the throw-away class

ROYAL BALLET Covent Garden (240 1059). Today Tues - Thurs at 7.30pm, Fri at 1.30pm

WAYNE SLEEP Dominion, Tottenham Court Road (580 9582). Preview Mon, Tues at 7.30pm, opera bill with Eyni Jolly Rolis and David Snells flanking the Golden Section from The Catherine Wheel is given Mon (Thurs)

JANET SMITH The Place (337 0031). Today at 4pm and 7.30pm

SADLER'S WELLS ROYAL BALLET Plymouth, Theatre Royal (0752 665956). Today at 2.30 and 7.30pm

PHOTOGRAPHY

THE GENIUS OF VENICE 1500-1600 at the Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House Piccadilly, London W1 until 11 March 1984 (closed 24 & 25 December)

PHOTOGRAPHY

it in the form of memorabilia or preserved steam trains. Most of the pictures were taken before the Second World War and many date from the 1850s.

PHOTOGRAPHY

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Entertainments

What's new on the GLC South Bank? GLC South Bank Concert Hall, South Bank, London SE1 8XX.

GROUP DISCOUNTS available for most Royal Festival and Queen Elizabeth Hall performances...

Royal Festival Hall. Open all day to everyone. Free lunchtime music.

MASSAGE CHORES OF THE LONDON HOSPITALS Christmas Concert. 18 Dec 7.30pm.

WHERE TO EAT. If you are in search of food and drink you need not look far.

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS. While there are no performances in the Royal Festival Hall on 22 and 23 December...

CAROLS ROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE. In the Royal Festival Hall between 6 pm and 7 pm each evening.

IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS. From the Royal Festival Hall book, record and gift shops in the foyer.

THE MUSIC BOX. Saturday 17 December: London Vintage Jazz Orchestra.

I LEONARDO. An exhibition of drawings and sketches by Ralph Steadman for his new and eccentric biography of Leonardo da Vinci.

DRAWN TO BALLET. An exhibition of drawings and lithographs by Zuzuki Roboz, arranged in association with the Exhibition Department of the Royal Festival Hall.

DAVID HOCKNEY POSTERS. An exhibition of a private collection of posters for galleries and the public.

THE SPIRIT OF LONDON. GLC Painting Exhibition. An exhibition of the posters and a selection of other entries to the GLC annual competition.

CRAFT EVENT. On Saturday 17 December, Sunday 18 December and Monday 19 December.

Purcell Room. Thursday 17 Dec 7.30pm. NACON DAVIDSON.

Friday 18 Dec 2.45pm. A CHRISTMAS BOX. MICHAEL AND DOREEN MURPHY.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. MAX TIPPICH in the Crypt. MADRIDINE BRINE.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ALLAN SCHILLER. JOHN HUMPHREYS.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. CHRISTOPHER ADDINGTON. RICHARD LEIGH.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. TCHAIKOVSKY EVENING. MARCHÉ SLAVE.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL. ELMAR OLIVEIRA violin.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. PURCELL ROOM. THE PARLOUR QUARTET.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. WIGMORE HALL. THE WIGMORE CHAMBER CONCERT.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. ROYAL CHORAL SOCIETY.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. TRADITIONAL FAMILY CAROL CONCERTS.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. ROLF HARRIS.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. VIENNESE NEW YEAR GALA.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. SYMPHONY ON ICE.

Friday 18 Dec 7.30pm. ROYAL ALBERT HALL. OPERA & BALLET.

St John's Smith Square. LONDON CHORALE.

Barbican Centre. SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. MONDAY 19 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. WEDNESDAY 21 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. THURSDAY 22 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. FRIDAY 23 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. SATURDAY 24 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. SUNDAY 25 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. MONDAY 26 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. TUESDAY 27 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. WEDNESDAY 28 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. THURSDAY 29 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. FRIDAY 30 DECEMBER 1983.

Barbican Centre. SATURDAY 31 DECEMBER 1983.

PURCELL ROOM. Monday 19th December 1983 at 7.30pm.

THEATRES. ADELPHI 535 7611.

THEATRES. ALBERT 535 7611.

THEATRES. ANTHEM 535 7611.

THEATRES. ARCADE 535 7611.

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CINEMAS. PERSONAL. THE REAL THING. THE MOUSETRAP. THE KING'S SINGERS.

Entertainments

John Piper

30 November-22 January



Piper is perhaps best known for his romantic landscape painting, but his work in stained glass, ceramics, fabrics and theatre design, now shown together for the first time, fully demonstrates his versatility.

Sponsored by Mobil

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Recorded information 01-8271728 Closed 23-26 December and 1 January

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GATE NOTTING HILL 221 0220/727 0760. John Christie, owner. Monday to a STAR 15 SEVEN 110. Monday to a STAR 15 SEVEN 110. Monday to a STAR 15 SEVEN 110. Monday to a STAR 15 SEVEN 110.

BANKSIDE GALLERY 57 St John St, London EC4A 3DF. Exhibitions by the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Royal Society of Painters and Sculptors. 10-5.30. Tel: 01-477 1111.

MITHRAM GALLERY 100 St John St, London EC4A 3DF. Exhibitions by the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Royal Society of Painters and Sculptors. 10-5.30. Tel: 01-477 1111.

CHRISTOPHER WOOD GALLERY 100 St John St, London EC4A 3DF. Exhibitions by the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Royal Society of Painters and Sculptors. 10-5.30. Tel: 01-477 1111.

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MINERVA 45 NIGHTSBRIDGE Tel: 01-232 4022. Exhibitions by the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Royal Society of Painters and Sculptors. 10-5.30. Tel: 01-232 4022.

ODON HAYMARKET 97-100 St John St, London EC4A 3DF. Exhibitions by the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Royal Society of Painters and Sculptors. 10-5.30. Tel: 01-477 1111.

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EXHIBITIONS

YOUNG BLOOD Open today 10.7. Victoria and Albert Museum. Tel: 01-581 4894.

ART GALLERIES

ANTHONY GOSWAMY 23 Devereux Street, London W1. Tel: 01-477 1111.

Battle for a breakthrough



"I want you to knock my socks off!" Cliff Robertson tells the hero of *Brainstorm*. It is a strange remark for an actor who generally passes through films without raising an eyebrow. But extreme circumstances breed extreme reactions, and Robertson is about to witness a colossal technological breakthrough.

With the aid of a headset, video tape and years of secret research, motion pictures can now plug itself into a person's thoughts, feelings and physical sensations. The test tape takes Robertson hunting, motorcycling and rushing down a tube into water. But other tapes are far less innocuous: one comes with the title "Psychic Episode - Madame Versini" - another records a character's death.

In the story, the breakthrough was accomplished by Christopher Walken and Louise Fletcher, research scientists for American corporation; in reality, credit belongs to Douglas Trumbull, the special effects wizard making his first film as director since the beguiling *Silent Running* (1971). Trumbull has been far from idle, however: he supervised the effects for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the first *Star Trek* film and *Blade Runner*. He has also developed a new widescreen process called Showscan, which photographs and projects high-definition images at top speed (60 frames per second, rather than 24) and requires custom-built cinemas.

Brainstorm was once envisaged as a Showscan project, though it ran into sufficient problems using conventional

JAWS IN D (PG)
ABC Baywater (229 4149)
ABC Edgware Road (723 5801)
ABC Fulham Road (370 2636)
Classic Oxford Street (836 0310)
Pleasure Palace Cinema (437 1234)
and on national release.

A must for anyone still anxious to get his teeth into a good disaster/horror movie. The poor old great white shark is once again the villain of the piece, this time biting the wife and outside jaws against the well-meaning scientists running a kind of super underwater theme park in Florida. The implausible plot is redeemed by the use of a new 3-D technique which allows one camera to shoot two images on a split beam.

Critics' choice

plays host to an alien visitor hooked on heroin. Directed by Salva Tuskerman.

MARY POPPINS (U)
The Royal, Charing Cross Road (832 1111)
Disney's famous musical about an Edwardian nanny with magical gifts; full of high spirits, jolly songs and technical wizardry. Made in 1964, with Julie Andrews, David Tomlinson, Glynis Johns, Dick Van Dyke.

NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN (PG)
ABC Baywater (229 4149)
ABC Edgware Road (723 5801)
ABC Fulham Road (370 2636)
Classic Oxford Street (836 0310)
Pleasure Palace Cinema (437 1234)
and on national release.

Unique and outrageous blend of pulp music, fashion show and film noir. A Russian émigré clearly delighting in Western decadence. New Wave dignitary Anna Carls stars as the Manhattan beauty whose roof

Films on TV

"How old: Cary Grant?" cabled the editor of a fan magazine. "Old Cary Grant fine," came the riposte, "how you?" He is still fine, though long since retired from movies, and next month he celebrates his eightieth birthday. For BBC2 and Channel 4, however, the celebration starts this week.

Picking the best from more than 70 films covering 34 years is ultimately a matter of opinion but a case can be made for the screwball comedies directed by Howard Hawks, in which the suave and assured Grant persona is undermined and humiliated to hilarious effect.

In *Monkey Business* (1952), on Channel 4 today (2.25-4.15pm), he takes a drug which produces a reversion to childhood; in *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949), Channel 4 tomorrow (10.25pm-12.20am), he is forced to dress up as a woman; and in *Bringing Up Baby* (1938), the BBC2 offering on Monday (3.55-5.35pm), he tries to cope with a baby leopard.

Other Grant films this week, all on BBC2, are: *Night and Day* (1946), today (8.50-10.58pm); *Mr Lucky* (1943), Tues (4.53-5.35pm); *Every Girl Should Be Married* (1948), Wed (4.15-5.35pm); *Mr Blandings Builds His Dream House* (1948), Thurs (3.30-5pm); and *The Grass Is Greener* (1960), Fri (3.55-5.35pm). The season continues up to the new year.

Peter Waymark

Also recommended: *Point Blank* (1967); Lee Marvin with a score to settle in John Boorman's fine, uncompromising, location-shot gangster thriller; *Angie*, Dickinson and Keenan Wynn in support (BBC1, Mon, 9.25-10.55pm); *Rollerball* (1975); James Caan, John Houseman and Ralph Richardson in Norman Jewison's vision of the twenty-first century, expressed through a violent combination of football and hockey (BBC2, Tues, 9-11pm); *The General* (1926); Buster Keaton's comic masterpiece and finally realized comedy about a locomotive during the American Civil War; one of four Keaton films on Channel 4 this week (Wed, 5.30-6.30pm); *The Dirty Dozen* (1967); Lee Marvin, Ernest Borgnine and Charles Bronson are among those recruited for a commando suicide mission; a huge commercial success for its director, Robert Aldrich, who died recently (BBC1, Fri, 10.05pm-12.30am); *Monkey Business* (1951); Inaugurates a season of six Marx Brothers' films on BBC2 over the Christmas period; this is the one in which Brocco and company are discovered as stowaways on an ocean liner (BBC2, Fri, 10.30-11.45pm).

*First British television showing.

PERSONAL COLUMNS

RENTALS

continued from page 28

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SITUATIONS WANTED

EXPERIENCED German secretary. Excellent references. Call 01-477 1111.

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MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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FOOD AND WINE

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PROF LADY to share flat in Epsom. Call 01-477 1111.

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CHINESE SILK CARPET Pale green, patterned in corners. Call 01-477 1111.

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PREVIEW Music

Concerts

FRENCH FESTIVALS Today, 7.30pm, Wigmore Hall. Tel: 01-477 1111.

EASY WINNERS Today, 7.30pm, Purcell Room. Tel: 01-477 1111.

BEETHOVEN QUARTETS Tomorrow, 5.30pm, Conway Hall. Tel: 01-477 1111.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT I Wed, 7.30pm, St James's. Tel: 01-477 1111.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT II Thurs, 7.45pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall. Tel: 01-477 1111.

TRUSTEE ACTS

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Rock & Jazz

TINA TURNER Tonight to Tues, The Venue, 160 Victoria Street, London SW1 (828 8441).

JAZZ CENTRE SOCIETY Tonight, 100 Club, 100 Oxford Street, London W1 (836 0850).

THE POLICE Tonight, St Austell Coliseum, Tues, NEC, Birmingham Fri, Brighton Centre.

ROBERT PLANT Tonight, Brighton Centre; Tomorrow, Royal Albert Hall, Nottingham; Wed, De Montfort Hall, Leicester; Fri, Birmingham Odeon.

ASWAD Tues, Lyceum, Wellington Street, London WC2 (836 3715).

MADNESS Wed, Lyceum. Still the nutty North Londoners, but constantly broadening their range.

IAN STEWART Fri, 100 Club. The "sixth Rolling Stone" leads a blues band including Charlie Watts.

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 226)

Prizes of the New Collins Concise English dictionary will be given for the first two correct solutions opened on Thursday, December 22, 1983.

ACROSS
1 Appointments (5)
4 Hindrance (3,4)
8 Beaver-like rodent (5)
9 Local (7)
10 Figurative allusion (8)
11 Hereditary unit (4)
13 Astrid (5)
15 Undersize person (4)
20 Epilepsy (5,3)
21 Similarity (7)
24 Strict vegetarian (5)
25 Distemper (7)
26 Superlative little (5)

DOWN
1 Abscond (5)
2 Secret meeting (5)
3 Figure carver (8)
4 Everyday light play (5)
5 Binding strip (4)
6 Magic (7)
7 Slaughterer (6)
12 Festive occasion (8)
14 Amusement park (7)
16 Exhaled air (6)
17 Because irritated (6)
18 Celestial body (6)
21 Earth's crust liquid (5)
22 Noose (4)

SOLUTION TO No 225
ACROSS: 1 Tricked 5 Lymph 8 Ova 9 Round 10 Cards 11 Flak 12 Staircase 14 Roller coaster 16 Uncouth 18 Slip 20 Round 22 Face off 23 Fat 24 Tiger 25 Salsina 26 Exhaled air (6)
DOWN: 1 Twin 2 Tipped 3 Knuckle duster 17 Because irritated (6) 18 Celestial body (6) 19 Froufrou 15 Lock out 17 Hefts 19 Adops 20 Aft

SOLUTION TO No 220 (Last Saturday's prize concise)
ACROSS: 1 Carob 2 Illicit 8 Spurn 9 Snippet 10 Rhetoric 11 High 13 Spot 15 Revel 19 Heal 20 Harangue 23 Radiant 24 Truce 25 Bustler 26 Radon
DOWN: 1 Casero 2 Route 3 Bonhomie 4 Instil 5 Lair 6 Caprice 7 Tetchy 12 Magister 14 Ps and Qs 16 Cherub 17 Banter 18 Harcin 21 Gourd 22 Mail

The winners of prize concise No 220 are: Mrs F. M. McGill, 96 Spencer Way, Redhill, Surrey, and A. Hall, 49 Hex Way, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex.

Name: _____
Address: _____

To advertise in the Times or Sunday Times please telephone 01-837 3311 or 3333

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THE WEEK AHEAD

Today

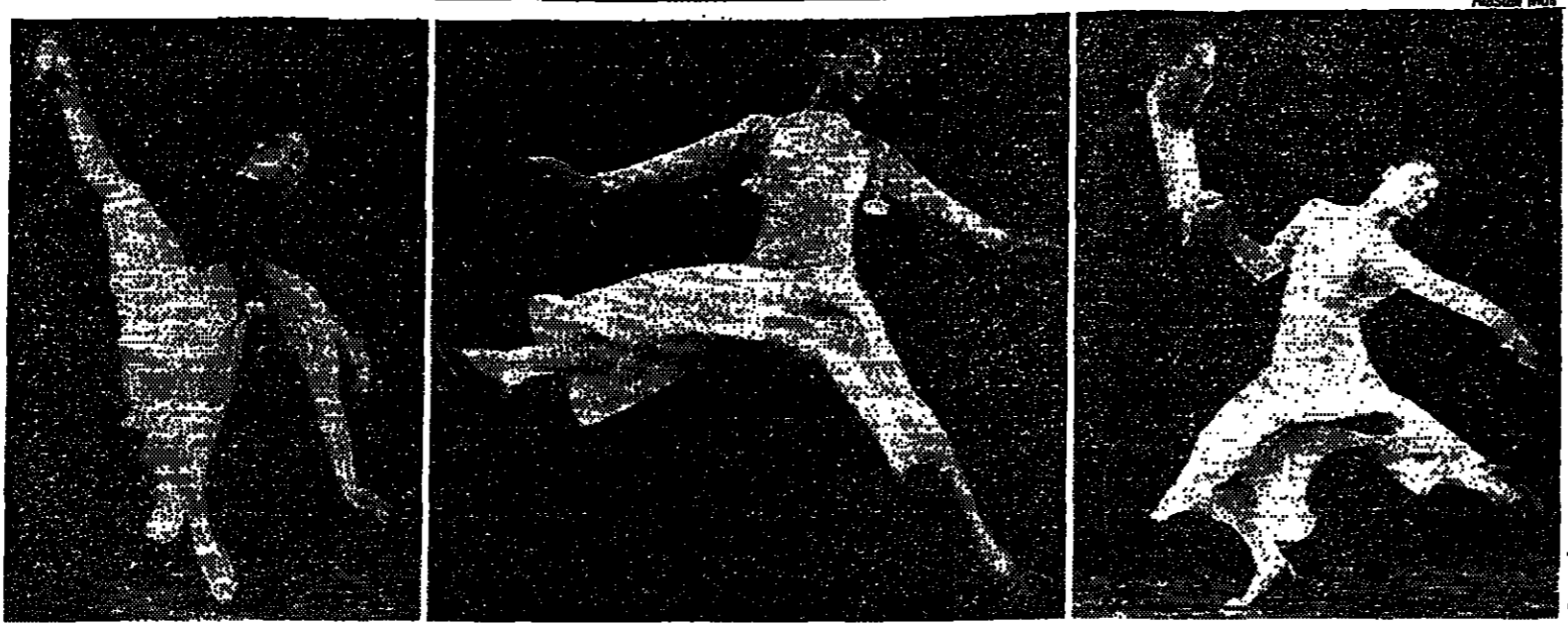
CAROLS: The Royal Choral Society under Meredith Davies leads the singing in the traditional family carol concerts today at 2.30pm and 7.30pm...

MESSIAH: Handel's oratorio, receives several performances this week. Today it is the turn of St Paul's Festival Choir and Orchestra at St Paul's Church, Wilton Place, London, SW1 at 7.30pm...

PETER PAN: The Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of the J. M. Barrie fantasy opens on Thurs at 7pm. With Mark Preece as Peter, Stephen Moore as Mr Darling and Captain Hook, Frances Tomelty as Mrs Darling and Katy Beahan as Wendy...

SINBAD THE SAILOR: Ken Dodd and his Diddymen feature in this first London revival of the show since 1907. With Michael Robbins, Jacques Toye, Wimbledon Theatre (540 0362). Opens today at 2.30pm and 7pm...

THE YEARS BETWEEN: First radio production of Daphne du Maurier's play, staged in London in 1945, about a husband and wife trying to pick up the threads after a wartime separation. Radio 4, 8.30-10pm.



Stimulating steps: Three moves from "Nine Sinatra Songs" by Shelley Washington and Keith Young of Twyla Tharp (see Dance)

Tomorrow

PELICAN DELTA: The delta of the River Danube is the most important remaining area for wildlife in Europe, twice the size of the Camargue and home for more than 45 species of fish and hundreds of species of birds from Europe, Asia and Africa...

PRANKS: The Forty Minutes documentary takes a light-hearted seasonal look at various unlikely services available for hire, including a couple of stripping nuns (who have set up in Business with a government grant) and an amorous pair who are engaged to live on sedate parties and the booming trade in kitesongers. BBC2, 9.35-10.15pm.

Monday

PAINTINGS QUIZ: The National Gallery is running two quizzes which demand a more careful look at its paintings. For adults, the quiz comprises a series of clues whose answers form a seasonal theme. Five £25 vouchers for use in the gallery's shop will reward correct solutions opened on Jan 9...

LUNCHTIME AT THE PALACE: Entertainment at the Palace Theatre, organized by its owner, Andrew Lloyd Webber. Today The Actor's Centre Choir sings carols, aided by Bonnie Langford and Sarah Brightman. Tomorrow the Kosh dance, on Wed

Richard Stilgoe entertains; there is a juggler and illusionist on Thurs; and Andrew Lloyd Webber and friends hold a Christmas party on Fri. Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue (437 6634). Noon-2.30pm, with mulled wine, bar drinks and Christmas food available. Adults £2, children and pensioners £1.

HI-DE-HI: The stage version of the popular television comedy series, set in a 1950s holiday camp opens at the Victoria Palace (828 4735) on Thurs at 8.30pm. With Simon Cadell, Ruth Madoc, Paul Shane, Jeffrey Holland and guest star Ben Watts. Previews today at 7.30pm, Tues and Wed at 6pm and 8.30pm, Thurs at 6pm, until Mar 10, Mon at 7.30pm, Tues-Sat at 6pm and 8.30pm.

THE WIZARD OF OZ: Charlie Drake and Fenella Fielding have leading roles (as the Cowardly Lion and the Wicked Witch of the West) in this stage version of the MGM film musical, using the original songs and music. Churchill Theatre, Bromley, Kent (468 6877). Opens today at 7.30pm, until Jan 7, Mon-Sat at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, until Jan 21, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Wed, Thurs and Sat at 4.15pm (except Jan 21 at 2.30pm).

GOOD FOR THE FIRST MILE: Six months in the life of the politician's son, aged 22, from Jarrow. Steve Carr, recently voted BBC Television sports personality of 1983. The film follows him through a series of injuries, altitude training in the snows of Colorado, his struggle even to qualify for the world championships and his eventual triumph in the 1500 metres. Channel 4, 9-10pm.

A TALENT FOR MURDER: Lord Olivier makes his first appearance in a BBC Television drama, an adaptation of the comedy thriller by Jerome Chodorov and Norman Panama which ran for two years on Broadway. He plays the English doctor of an American detective writer (Angela Lansbury). As the writer's family gather at her home to celebrate her birthday, murder is committed and each person becomes a suspect. BBC2, 9.25-10.55pm.

Tuesday

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL: The London Symphony Orchestra gives three concerts of seasonal music, conducted by Richard Hickox. Vivaldi's "Winter" from The Four Seasons, Britten's A Ceremony of Carols, Bach's "Christmas Eve Joyful" from the Christmas Oratorio and other music are played before the interval, after which there are carols for orchestra, chorus and audience. Barbican Hall, London EC2 (628 8795). Today, tomorrow and Thurs at 7pm. Tickets £3-9.

ORWELL ON JURA: With 1984 only two weeks away, we prepared for an avalanche of media reassessments of George Orwell and his last novel with its nightmare vision of a future totalitarian society. This drama documentary, written by Alan Plater, follows the three-year preparation of Nineteen Eighty-Four on the Hebridean island of Jura and Orwell's struggle to finish the book against falling health. He is played by Ronald Pickup. BBC1, 9.25-10.55pm.

Wednesday

TREASURED POSSESSIONS: Owners of historic houses in England, Scotland and Wales have lent more than 200 works of art for an exhibition mounted in conjunction with the Historic Houses Association. Many pieces have close connections with the houses they come from, such as Chippendale furniture from Burton Constable Hall for which it was commissioned and a portrait of the third Duke of Norfolk attributed to Holbein from Arundel Castle. Sotheby's, New Bond Street, London W1 (463 8080). Until Jan 20, Mon-Sat 10.30am-5.30pm, Sun 2.30-5.30pm. Admission £2 including full catalogue.

GOING, GOING: The history of motoring, cycling and flight is encompassed in a giant sale of 500 lots. Mascots, trophies, commemoratives, equipment, pictures,

books, ephemera, penny-farthings, a Napoleonic tricycle and some nautical items are for sale. For motorists who have everything there are some stunning Lique radiator mascots at around £2,000. Phillips, Blenheim Street, London W1 (629 6802) at noon.

A NEW DASH: Wayne Sleep and his company of 12 dancers are back in the West End with a show which incorporates many new routines. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (580 9682/323 1576). Opens today at 7pm. For a season, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Sat at 2.30pm.

DICK WHITTINGTON: Roy Hudd, June Whitfield, Hugh Lloyd, Richard Murdoch, Honor Blackman and John Hanson are in a new show written by Roger Feggetter. Richmond Theatre, The Green, Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey (940 0088). Opens today at 7.30pm, until Jan 7, Mon-Sat at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, then until Feb 2, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Tues, Thurs and Sat at 2.30pm.

MADAME BUTTERFLY: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's celebrated 1974 film of Puccini's tragic opera about the Japanese geisha who is loved and abandoned by an American marine lieutenant, Placido Domingo and Miella Freni sing the leading roles in Italian, with English subtitles and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Channel 4, 9-11.30pm.

THE ROADS OF EXILE: Francois Simon stars as the eighteenth century Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau in a two-part television film directed by Claude Goretta (best known for his movie The Lacemaker and, like Rousseau, born in Geneva). The film follows Rousseau's flight through Europe, followed by his servant girl mistress, as his latest book is condemned by the authorities in France. part one 10.45-12.25am; part two tomorrow, 11.10pm-1am.

Thursday

COUNTRY LINES: A lovely piece of railway nostalgia as Breakfast Time reporter Nigel Farrell travels on four of the most picturesque and remote branch lines on the British Rail network: Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge in Wales; Settle to Carlisle, which is threatened with closure; St Erth to St Ives in Cornwall; and the West Highland line in Scotland, which has the highest and the loneliest station in Britain. BBC1, 2-2.30pm.

ACCOUNTS: The latest in the series of films produced under the auspices of Channel 4 is a sensitive study of a widow and her two sons who pull up their Northumbrian roots and take on a new farm in the harsh Scottish border country near Kelso. It was written by Michael Wilcock, from the stage play which won him the 1981 George Orwell award for the most promising young theatre writer, and directed by Michael Derlow. Channel 4, 9.30-11.20pm.

Friday

WINNING CAROL: The BBC Television Carol Competition, now in its eighth year and being run for the first time by Breakfast Time, has attracted nearly 2,000 entries from schools, who were asked to compose an original carol and send in a cassette of it being performed. Today the six finalists will perform their compositions in Southwell Minster, Nottinghamshire, before a judging panel of Rod Argent, Kiki Dee and Peter Skellern. BBC1, 6.40-7.15am

HELLO DOLLY!: Danny La Rue, Lionel Jeffries, Lorna Dallas open in the first ever production of the popular Jerry Herman musical to star a man. Directed by Peter Cox, Prince of Wales (930 8881). Today at 7.30pm, until Apr 28, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Thurs and Sat at 2.30pm

PRIDE OF OUR ALLEY: The busy Alan Plater turns from the tortured last years of George Orwell to the Lancashire mill girl Grace Stanisfield who, as Grace Fields, became one of Britain's most popular entertainers and a folk heroine who has not only coped with an age span of 60 years but had the former's unique voice. All ITV regions, 8.15-9.45pm.

DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURALLY: Sheridan Morley looks at the phenomenon of Irving Berlin, now 95, who had his first big success with Alexander's Ragtime Band and went on to write more than 3,000 songs. Though he never learned to read music and composed on a piano with an automatic key-changing device. Taking part in the programme are Alan Jay Lerner, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Ethel Merman and Jerome Robbins. Radio 4, 8.30-10pm.

Week following

Dec 24 (Christmas Eve): Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, King's College, Cambridge, at 3pm.

Country Diary

Changes at home on the ranges

The last country diary I wrote was criticized in some quarters for harping too much on motorways and, worse still, for being apparently in their favour. So let me begin this one, even more improbably, at an airfield outside Watford on a cold, grey murky winter morning.

My host is Robin Malim, who learnt to fly in the Royal Air Force and nowadays does most of his business travelling at the controls of a Cessna six-seater. Our destination is what conservationists call the East Anglian prairies, the East Anglian cornbelt where in the past few years farmers have ruthlessly stripped away trees and hedges to make room for bigger machines and bigger profits.

Robin, relaxed and affable, is not an easy man to dislike. But for many people, farmers as well as environmentalists, he symbolizes all that is worst about contemporary British agriculture and poses a dire threat to what is left of our traditional rural society.

He is managing director of a farm called Velocour, which farms some 24,000 acres of land owned by City institutions. It also farms 40,000 acres in Australia and has recently set up a technical consultancy in France to teach the locals how to grow wheat and barley more efficiently.

It began life back in 1966, when he and three fellow farmers decided to pool their resources. Only two of the original four partners remain. The three farms we are to see today are all owned by the Hill Samuel Unit Trust. We had five miles from Cambridge and are met by James King, the regional manager and son of Velocour's chairman. On our way to the first farm we pass Wimpole Hall, once the home of Rudyard Kipling and now owned by the National Trust.



It is this, I wonder, the shape of things to come; bits and pieces of the countryside preserved as rural museums, while all around them the new agribusiness managers go about their task of wresting ever higher yields from soils drenched in fertilizers and herbicides? It certainly looks that way as we drive on through huge fields green with fast-burgeoning winter crops, with not a hedgerow to be seen and only an occasional forlorn and solitary tree.

But Velocour claim the damage was all done before they arrived. Not only do they make a practice of not removing trees and hedgerows, but they planted 30,000 new trees last year alone. James points to a new young woodland: "All proper trees, oak, ash, hazel, field alder, hawthorn and so on, none of your wretched conifers."

The key to conservation, Robin insists, is profitability. "There's no way you can do a Capability Brown unless you can automate it," says the farmer who insists making money will simply be tempted to try to grow more and more grain wherever he can.

The road to profitability, however, is considerably less straightforward than the farm tracks of Cambridgeshire. Back in the 1970s Velocour was among the first to reject the plough as unnecessary; all that was needed, it was then said, was light tillage before direct drilling of the new seed.

It seemed like a good idea at the time, but after a decade Velocour has gone back to ploughing. It is also concerned about the size and weight of modern farm machinery, and next autumn James is determined to use nothing but tracked vehicles in order to minimize soil compaction. The company has also decided to abandon straw burning as antisocial. Robin expects that chopping and ploughing in the harvest residue will mean that a lot more nitrogen is needed for the next three or four years but that eventually, if the German experience is anything to go by, the soil structure will be improved.

Malton farm, which is nearly 700 acres, is run by two men, with extra casual help at harvest time. In winter the main tasks are machine maintenance and keeping the pigeons off the oilseed rape.

Tim Durrant, the manager, says the birds get used to the "gas guns", in which propane is ignited by batteries at timed intervals to make a bang. He thinks there is more future in radio-controlled model aircraft. "They don't mind humans with guns on the ground. But when there's something up there buzzing around in the air with them, they don't know what's going on."

Now that reality is innova- John Young

Family Life

Hints for reluctant yuletide hostesses

In the carefree days of my youth, before I learned to drive or had children, I used to look forward to Christmas. On the morning of Christmas, Eve I would take a taxi to Liberty's, sweep through the emporium buying silk scarves, cravats and key-rings, then out again to find another cab, pausing only for a large brandy in Verreys. I would ask the second cab driver to stop at the market where I would pick up a bird, a few pounds of sprouts and a sprig of mistletoe, and then I would go home.

It was always an expensive outing, but undertaken with a certain style, and I wish that the girl who sallied forth with only a large cheque-book in her handbag were alive today instead of the woman who is frowning about the fact that she hasn't yet bought a Christmas present, made a mince pie or sent out a single card.

It's the same every year, about mid-November I nudge myself and swear to follow the Guide's motto to be prepared - then studiously ignore all the orange and red alerts that warn of the impending crisis. It is partly because I genuinely object to what we all now accept with resignation - the horrendous over-commercialization of what should be a religious or family affair; and partly because, though I have no great affection for panic or deadlines, they are so much a part of my life that without the adrenalin that accompanies them, I feel no sense of urgency, like a spring without a coil or a houseman without a bleep.

Had I had my way, we would all be happily celebrating Christmas - somewhere with deep pile carpets and interior sprucing matresses, to an atmosphere that would envelop us with its hospitality and yuletide efficiency, and where all the chefs would do the work. But the family will have none of it. For them Christmas has to be all about making puddings and pies, dressing the tree, wrapping presents in secrecy and opening them noisily at dawn. They like their local carol singers, the bustle of friends crossing our threshold on Christmas morning bringing bottles and good cheer - and best of all the sight of me suggesting to the table bearing the golden goose: "Christmas, they say year after year, would not be the same if we weren't at home."

I do have friends who manage to get away from it all - but they are, to man and woman, either rich or childless or both. Not for them the fingers scolded trying to peel the chestnuts to go with the sprouts (which only half the family likes anyway); or the in-laws who don't speak to each other but would be offended not to be asked; or the friend who hasn't a home to go to and decides to visit yours for a quick drink on Christmas morning and has to be put to bed (one of yours) very drunk, twelve hours later. While sybaritic friends sit sipping Lowenbrau above some snowy piste, or sun themselves on a Caribbean beach, I - and thousands like me - will be doing my damndest to see that



those I love - and some that I don't - are having the Christmas of their lives; and wondering as I do each year, whether it is worth all the effort and expense.

And provided nobody dies, slips a disc, sets light to the dog, has a massive row or crashes the car (all of which I have known to happen), I will of course conclude that it is.

Now I must make my list - and just in case any of you is as absent-minded or short-sighted as me I will commit it to paper. Make list of everything I need from toilet rolls to tin foil. Get family to check and add to it. Plan to visit supermarket early one morning with two helpers, one to find boxes and carry same to car and one to cross off items as we go. Save all cardboard boxes because dustbins are never big enough. Buy twice as much wrapping paper. Sellotape, butter and cream as I think I'll need. Buy half as many nuts and dates (I still have last year's). Prepare and freeze mince pies, stuffings, sausage rolls and brandy butter.

Make note in diary to remove same from freezer the day before Christmas Eve. Get butcher to weigh turkey/goose so I'll know how long to cook it for and we won't sit down for dinner at 10pm on Christmas night. Buy half a dozen presents for

unexpected guests and a dozen extra cards plus stamps for friends we thought had forgotten us. Make another list of all distant friends and family to telephone with seasonal greetings. Buy large bottle of Alka Seltzer, bottles of Vitamins B, C, E and Paracetamol - for those who didn't know when to stop. Buy three times as many cigarettes as I otherwise would (all those who are trying to give up will make exceptions because it's Christmas and smoke mine). Find out what time midnight mass really starts this year and allow twice as much time as I think I need to get there, park and find a seat that isn't behind a pillar. Ensure there's plenty of soda - for drinks and to squirt on spillages. Decide now how much I'm going to spend on presents and exceed it only by half as much again. Buy myself a little something to slip into on Christmas morning as what is bought for me will either not fit or be too good to risk ruining in my attempts to achieve a balance between being mother/wife/cook and hostess. Put this list in my diary for Monday morning so I won't forget I've made it. Happy Christmas. Judy Froshaug

Bridge

Fatal decision that dealt defeat

The all-American semi-final of the 1983 World Championships was a one-sided contest which the Aces won by 185 IMPs to 82 IMPs.

The clash between Italy and France in the other semi-final was an entirely different matter, with the issue in doubt until the final board. After 64 boards, Italy led by 14 IMPs, but France regained 50 points on the next 16 boards to lead by 37 at the halfway stage. With only 48 boards to play, the French had stretched their advantage to 62 IMPs, and with Italy's star pair, Belladonna and Garozzo, lacking the fire of former years, it seemed that France would surely prevail.

But Italy, relying mostly on their tried quartet of Franco, De Falco, Lauria and Mosca, clawed back 59 points in the next 32 boards to leave the score France 311, Italy 308, with one short session to play. They were still five points behind when they came to board 152. Italy v France. Love all. Dealer South.

It seems to me that South (Lebel) must take the blame for missing the excellent slam. After all, North (Soulet) had cue bid both his opponents' suits, so Lebel could count 11 tricks with any spade finesse sure to succeed. This was the Italian bidding:

1 A limited hand, usually based on clubs. 2 A relay to extract further information. Cronier's final double promised one defensive trick. Now Corn had to decide whether his O'K would produce the other. It didn't. Most critics blamed Corn. But no one likes to make a phantom sacrifice, and six hearts doubled would have cost at least 700. So Italy scored 1090 and gained 12 IMPs, to lead by 7 IMPs with eight boards to play. The hand which undoubtedly decided the match was board 156.

North-South game. Dealer West. This was the bidding when France held the North-South cards.

Table with 4 columns: W, N, S, E. Values: Mosca 14, Soulet 24, Lauria 30, Lebel 44. Includes a small bidding diagram.

To the accompaniment of Italian groans in the audience, Mosca and Lauria languished in four clubs. It seemed as if Italy's fate was sealed. But this was the bidding in the other room:

Table with 4 columns: W, N, S, E. Values: Franco 2NT(1), Cronier 0, De Falco 4A(2), Corn 4NT(3).

1 A moderate hand with both majors. 2 A well-judged barrage. 3 Perhaps a little under strength, but Corn could not allow non-vulnerable opponents to "pick his pocket". 4 With no room to explore, Cronier had to guess.

It turned out to be a fatal decision when De Falco led the 9A and gave his partner a ruff. So the Italians emerged battle-scarred but victorious to face their old rivals, the American Aces, in the 176-board final. Could they find the inspiration to avenge their defeat in Rio de Janeiro in 1979, or would the American Aces, as most observers expected, prove too solid?

Jeremy Flint

Chess

Refreshing vigour of a winner

My absorption with the Acorn Computers' World Championship semifinals, which have been rightly attracting great public attention at the Great Eastern Hotel in Liverpool Street, London, has prevented me from covering a number of highly attractive and important Swiss system events that have been, and are being, played in November and December.

Perhaps the most interesting of these was the Accountancy Age Masters tournament, the latest in the series of Lewisham tournaments held in London from November 24 to December 2. It contained 53 players who played nine rounds Swiss system. There was a distinguished entry that included five grandmasters: Westernin from Finland, Forintos and Flesch from Hungary, and Sicán and Miles from England. An out-of-form Tony Miles withdrew after the first five rounds with a score of 2½.

The tournament contained eight international masters: Hebden and Plaskett (England), Dizdár and Ilie (Yugoslavia), Pytel (Poland), Hartoch (Netherlands), Rogers (Australia), and Iskov (Denmark). It was Jim Plaskett who dominated the event, as indeed he has done so many others this year. He won six games, including among his victims Hartoch, Conquest and (a new name) Rigo from Hungary. With a score of 7½ out of 9, he came first, a point ahead of the field. Equal second were Crouch, Hebden, Rigo and Westernin with 6½.

A beautiful game, played and won by Plaskett in the penultimate round which proved decisive as regards the destination of the first prize went as follows: White: C. Crouch, Black: H. J. Plaskett. Q.P. Queen's Indian Defence.

This idea, by now a little old-fashioned though once regarded as the latest mode, is a counter-attack justified by White's waste of a tempo with P-Q3. A new, but not particularly good, idea. Plaskett thinks 5... P-Q4 "a more correct response", but I like this vigorous move. Too slow; better was 8 N-N3. Qx8, 9 N-B3.

White's position collapses like a house of cards. A game conducted with refreshing vigour by the winner. Harry Golombek

CHRISTIE'S St. James's 8 King Street London SW1 Sales Opportunities 1984 Silver 22nd February Entries close 23 December English Furniture 23rd February Entries close 23 December Old Master Pictures 24th February Entries close 23 December Early Furniture 1st March Entries close 3 January Wine 1st March Entries close 3 January Victorian Pictures 2nd March Entries close 4 January

LOOKING INTO SPACE The Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (821 1131). Today until Jan 8 except Dec 23-25 and Jan 1, Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2pm-5.50pm. Free. Paralympic for 8-14 year olds, the Tate's Christmas looks at ways in which artists have achieved space and depth in their pictures. Also until Jan 5, the annual Christmas Tree Guessing Game - prizes for children who guess the number of cards. MACHINES AND MOTION The Royal Institution, 21 Albermarle Street, W1 (492 6470). Today, Mon, Wed, Fri and Dec 23, Museum, 23 Crown Hill, W2 (262 7905). Tues-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Until Mar 31, 1984. Adults £1.50, children 50p. An exhibition celebrating the toy animal with nearly 1,000 on display

Outings aged 10-17. Apply to the lectures' secretary for tickets. DISCOVERY ROOM Science Museum, South Kensington, SW7 (589 3458). Mon until Jan 7, Mon-Sat 11.30am-4.15pm. Free. A selection of "hands on" experiments and demonstrations for children - and adults. ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL The London Toy & Model Museum, 23 Crown Hill, W2 (262 7905). Tues-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Until Mar 31, 1984. Adults £1.50, children 50p. An exhibition celebrating the toy animal with nearly 1,000 on display

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Secrets of... Tootal sells £20m stake in Australia... INTEREST RATES... NEWS IN BRIEF

THE TIMES

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

A Crocker full of trouble for Midland

To judge from Crocker Bank's losses the end of Midland Bank's suffering is not yet in sight...



Geoffrey Taylor: Legacy to sort out.

But two important strategic errors of the bank's own making have caused more serious problems than malign fate...

Divide and rule may occasionally be a useful principle in structuring senior management but division without rule has nothing to commend it.

The legacy they left him was not enviable and it will take a long time to sort out. Meanwhile, there is Crocker.

Thursday night's news from California that Crocker has moved into the red this year and will halve its dividend confirms some of the worst fears about the quality and performance of Midland's 57 per cent-owned subsidiary.

Midland's investment, which because it is so large and because it is in the United States, is crucial to the bank and its shareholders.

Generally US banks are available only if they are poorly managed and/or they have exceptional difficulties with which they cannot cope.

and vulnerable loan positions in Latin America. It had a deep commitment in real estate lending in California and, again in common with other US banks, it was running into a period of intensifying pressure on margins.

Flat corporate loan demand and, more significantly, deregulation of American banking, which has brought fierce and costly competition for deposits in the past 12 months, are making the going tough.

Midland's acquisition of Crocker is, therefore, a high cost and high risk venture. Banking in the United States for foreigners is not the easiest game in the world at the best of times.

The Federal Reserve Board concurred with Crocker's insistence that it should be allowed to run its own affairs, without direction or interference from London.

Midland had virtually no warning of the huge provisions on property loans and appears to have been kept in the dark about the seriousness of the situation.

This is clearly now going to change. Two of Midland's main board directors are off to California to agree with Crocker's senior management "specific ways of improving performance and to determine future working relationships between Midland and Crocker".

The affair could scarcely have come at a worse time for Midland which has just begun to get profits moving ahead again and appeared to be coming to grips with some of its long-standing problems.

Rothschild buys maximum stake in Smith Brothers

By Wayne Lintott

Rothschild Group, the holding company of merchant bank N M Rothschild, has reached agreement to buy a 29.9 per cent stake in Smith Brothers the London stockjobbers.

The deal follows an agreement reached last month between S G Warburg, the merchant bank, and Alroyd and Smithers, the stockjobbers.

£6m part bid for Maynards

By Jonathan Clare

Mr Lewis Cartier, the entrepreneur who built Cartier Superfoods out of a butcher's delivery round, is back in Britain and has made a surprise partial bid for Maynards, the confectionery and toy chain.

Mr Cartier launched his 250p-a-share bid late yesterday after talks with the Maynards directors broke down.

The aim, if he is successful, is to expand Maynards 72-shop toy retailing arm into a 300-strong chain with the confectionery manufacturing and retailing divisions sold off to their managers.

Mr Cartier qualified as a butcher in 1964 when he was 18 and quickly appreciated the potential of providing low price food for people with frugal tastes.

The toy shops trade under the Zodiak name and are mainly distributed close to the motorway system but with no outlets in the South.

Three-quarters of the shares are in institutional hands

partner. Leading merchant banks have been named as potential partners but National Westminster is still considered the front runner.

The flurry of activity by leading institutions and stockbrokers and jobbers, who act as wholesalers of shares to the brokers, arise from the restructuring taking place in the stock market.

Greater competition is expected, particularly if the single capacity role separating share-wholesalers and retailers is abolished in favour of dual capacity.

Rothschild is paying a total £11.5m, subject to the approval of the regulatory authorities, the Stock Exchange Council, Bank of England and Smith Shareholders. It is paying 95p a share in cash for 900,000 new shares

and £5.65m for nominal 8.75 per cent unsecured loan stock 2000 at par for cash.

On that basis the bankers have paid five times earnings, plus a modest premium. Smith Brothers shares were trading at 88p before the announcement having improved from 38p during the year.

The bankers cannot take up more of the Smith Brothers shares but intend forming an international dealing subsidiary next April when Stock Exchange rules permit.

Rothschild has interests in Australia, Hongkong, Singapore, America and Europe, mainly in Zurich. It is attracted by Smith Brothers' wholesale dealing expertise which the bank will exploit for international business.

Smith Brothers' New York business will be incorporated into a subsidiary 51 per cent owned by Smiths, 49 per cent by Rothschild. The offshoot will be capitalized at £10m, half of which will be paid for by Smith.

Exploratory talks began a few weeks ago; formal discussions completed the deal this week. Both sides admit having spoken to other groups but the synergy between us was so obvious that the agreement was almost a foregone conclusion, said Mr Tony Lewis, Smith chairman.

Recently Mr Jacob Rothschild's RIT & Northern financial services group revealed a 7.7 per cent stake in Smith.

The other major Smith shareholder is Finance for Industry which holds loan stock when converted, equivalent to 18 per cent.

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London Brick to lobby OFT

By Jeremy Warner

London Brick is expected to lobby the Office of Fair Trading next week in an attempt to have an unwanted £170m cash bid from Hanson Trust referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

It believes there is "strong possibility" of its case being accepted by the OFT which has confirmed that it will be taking a close look at the takeover bid.

London Brick is Britain's sole producer of cheap flinton housebuilding bricks while Hanson has about 20 per cent of the non-flinton facing brick market through its Butterley Building Materials offshoot.

London Brick last summer won clearance from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to make a takeover bid for Istock Johnson, another leading producer of non-flinton bricks, but decided against proceeding. The finding of the commission have encouraged Hanson into believing that an alternative merger between Butterley and London Brick will also be allowed to go ahead without government interference.

But this view was being challenged yesterday. One reason why London Brick was given clearance by the commission was because it was found to have exercised its flinton monopoly responsibly.

Mr Jeremy Rowe its chairman, pointed out. The commission also went to considerable lengths to make clear that other mergers in the brick industry might not be viewed as favourably.

Mr Rowe said that since publication of the commission's report in August, the company has expanded its presence in non-flinton bricks fivefold through a combination of acquisition and green field development.

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London Brick's share price jumped 31p to 136p in the market - way ahead of Hanson's bid - and a number of alternative mergers for the group were being mentioned by stockbroking analysts. These included a defensive merger with Sietley, itself the subject of an unwanted £15m takeover bid from Hepworth Ceramic which is before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Tarmac has emerged as the mystery suitor for Francis Parker, the building materials and property development group, with an agreed bid worth £16m. It is offering 50p in cash for each share.

Public sector borrowing up sharply

By Peter Wilson-Smith, Banking Correspondent

Public sector borrowing rose sharply in November, bringing the total to £3.8 billion in the first eight months of the financial year. This is £3 billion higher than at the corresponding time last year but Whitehall officials pointed out yesterday that there were many special factors and the Treasury is still confident that the Chancellor's latest forecasts will be met.

In the autumn Mr Nigel Lawson raised the Government's forecast for the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) - the difference between what the public sector spends and what it produces in taxes - from £8.2 billion to £10 billion.

The November borrowing requirement of £1.671 billion compared with £67m the previous month and £880m in November last year. The figures show departmental spending rising at 9.8 per cent, still well above the 5.4 per cent forecast in the last budget.

Several factors, including EEC payments, are said to have swollen the figures, and officials put the underlying rise at about 8 per cent.

The latest figures, however, may lead some to take more seriously the Chancellor's warning last month that taxes could have to rise next year.

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Secrets of a Telecom engineer

If you want some plumbing done, say, British Telecom engineers can usually oblige. They cannot be accused of moonlighting because, in my experience, the work is done in daylight when ordinary people are trying to get through to British Telecom to find out why they cannot have a telephone installed without waiting weeks.

As you may know, you cannot have a prestel unit until BT's engineers have put in the appropriate jack. They insist on a jack monopoly, although it is simple to install. Four weeks ago my Prestel equipment supplier informed BT. Three and a half weeks later nothing had happened; or it seemed nothing had happened. In fact BT engineers arrived at the door on Wednesday, but as no one was in, they went away without even disturbing the letter box with a visiting card.

They had, I was told by the supplier, "made an appointment for that day and had now made another appointment in January." But I protested, they had made no such appointment with me. "No, not with you; they make an internal appointment with themselves."

It seems to me that, with a bit of luck, BT engineers can go on for ever making internal appointments which, because the customer is not let into the secret, will be kept by them alone. Of course, no jack will be installed, no Prestel unit delivered.

I hope that is not what Sir George has in mind even if the privatization of BT merely substitutes a private for a public sector monopoly. Perhaps a smidgen of the £8m earmarked for marketing BT shares next year could be put into making the internal appointment system at least partially external? Who knows, it might be Prestel's salvation.

£58m loss at British Shipbuilders

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

British Shipbuilders, which is threatened with a national shipyard strike next month, confirmed yesterday that its losses for the half year to September 30 totalled £58m.

The corporation, which has become the Government's most persistent nationalized industry headache, is set to record losses for the year of well over 100m. Last summer, it announced 1982-83 losses of £128m and said that a further 9,000 jobs would be cut in the next two years.

The group continues to be hit by the world slump in merchant ship ordering and by the decline in offshore work.

Several yards already face closure and Mr Graham Day, the chairman, has warned workers who plan to strike over the corporation's £7-a-week productivity deal that more job cuts might be necessary. The effect of a strike on customer confidence would be devastating, he says.

The corporation is making no new offer to avert the strike and is hoping that a ballot by the boilermakers' union will show workers to be against a stoppage.

Mr Roy Danzig, finance director of Britoil, the oil company that was privatized last November, is leaving the corporation to devote more time to his family business. He will be succeeded by Mr Bob Speirs.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tootal sells £20m stake in Australia

The Tootal Group has agreed to sell its stake in the Australian Bradmill Industries for £20.1m to Entrand, the Australian public company that was party to the failed bid for Courtauld's Australian subsidiary, Courtauld Hilton.

A £23.6m deal to sell Tootal's 49.9 per cent holding in Bradmill to another Australian company, Bruck (Australia), was blocked by the Australian National Companies and Securities Commission in July 1982.

Tootal shares closed up 2p at 39 1/2p yesterday.

Mr John Harvey-Jones, chairman of ICI has joined the board of Grand Metropolitan as a non-executive director.

City and industry urged to share export tip-offs

By John Lawless

A secretariat based on the Confederation of British Industry to swap export sales leads between manufacturers, City bankers and consultants was proposed yesterday in a report sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The report, called Success in Invisibles, says: "This move will, at last, bring the three most important sectors of our economy - industry, the City and the professions - right into the forefront of attempts to link modern information technology to dynamic marketing."

"The rewards could be huge and would put Britain years ahead of its competitors."

The report, by Mr Andrew Tessler of ICI Research, also asks the City institutions not to be so secretive with the early warnings of foreign business they get.

Success in Invisibles is available from ICI Research, Silverwood, Park Copse, Dorking, Surrey RH5 4BL, prices £20.

The Committee on Invisible Exports yesterday changed its name to the British Invisible Exports Council (BIE). It also announced that Lord Limerick, former chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, is to head a new overseas promotion committee.

Charterhouse Petroleum in £47m deal Expansion for oil high-flier

By Jonathan Davis, Financial Correspondent

Charterhouse Petroleum confirmed its reputation as one of the fastest growing and most ambitious of the smaller British oil companies yesterday with a £47m acquisition, which it coupled with a £38.7m rights issue.

The acquisition involves Charterhouse buying oil and gas interests in the United Kingdom, Holland, Ireland and Egypt from Fluor, the United States petrochemical company. Of the \$66m total purchase price, \$45.7m is going on North Sea and onshore assets in this country.

They include a 12.7 per cent interest in the Buchan field in the North Sea and a 12.6 per cent interest in the Humby Grove field near Basingstoke in Hampshire, which is scheduled to begin production in 1985.

The deal involves two other onshore oil discoveries, eight North Sea licences and a spread of acreage in southern England.

The other sizable element of the deal is \$20.1m which Charterhouse is spending on a small stake in a raven gas field and a potentially commercial oil discovery in The Netherlands' offshore waters.

Yesterday's announcement follows hard on the heels of the company's decision to spend £37.5m on buying a 1.25 per cent stake in BP's Forties field in the recent auction. The two deals will give a significant boost to Charterhouse's assets, reserves and a cash flow, but will also - as with several other

recent North Sea deals - help to rationalize the company's tax position.

Charterhouse is forecasting that pretax profits this year will not be less than £9.5m (against £9.8m last year). The post-tax figure could be substantially higher, however, thanks to the rationalization of its tax position as a result of its two recent big deals, Mr Anthony Craven-Walker, the managing director, said yesterday.

Mr Roy Danzig, finance director of Britoil, the oil company that was privatized last November, is leaving the corporation to devote more time to his family business. He will be succeeded by Mr Bob Speirs.

If you have a gilt maturing in 1984...

What next? WHERE SHOULD I INVEST NEXT? During 1984, more than £5,000 million of government stocks will be redeemed by private and corporate investors. But, for each of these investors, there is one vital question to be answered. As the security, reliability and potential tax-efficiency of government stocks appeals to you, you'll need to know - before you re-invest - which of the 90 or so gilts available is most suitable for your personal requirements. Or whether there is an advantage by selling your gilt before it matures. The only way to find out the answer for sure is to subscribe to the Barlow Clowes Gilt Monitor. It's independent, unique and provides an immediate report followed by two personal reports every year. The cost? To monitor one stock - £12.50 per annum: with additional stocks at £6.75 each. (Prices include VAT.) To receive full details, with no obligation, please complete and return the coupon below - or telephone 01-588 0838 (24-hour answering service).

Barlow Clowes & Partners Gilt Edged Specialists. To: Barlow Clowes & Partners, Wamford Court, Throgmorton Street, London EC2N 2AL. Please send me details of your Gilt Monitor Service. NAME ADDRESS

INVESTORS' NOTEBOOK

Wedgwood beats overseas blues

Wedgwood, the renowned tableware maker, should produce profits this year close to the record £8.7m made in 1979...

Substantial losses have been stemmed by changes in the product line. Total losses from Glendale and Croydon were £700,000.

ROLL-UP FUNDS Now a planned, sensible approach. Since the Treasury announcement in November that from 1st January 1984...

Cluff Oil Investors in Cluff Oil have long become accustomed to the fact that the company's figures are an unreliable guide to its health.

COMMODITIES LONDON COMMODITY PRICES RUBBER in £25 per tonne... SILVER SMALL Three months 618.20...

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE Official closing prices. COPPER HIGH GRADE Three months 925.44...

Form for Reed Stenhouse Gibbs investment services, including contact details and a confidentiality statement.

Woolwich Equitable Building Society advertisement. Homebuyers helped up 18% to 77,191. Investors' balances up 13% to £4,168m. -another good year with the Woolwich!

Woolwich Equitable Building Society advertisement. Extracts from the Statement by the Chairman, Sir Oliver Chesterton MCFRCS, to the 136th Annual General Meeting of the Woolwich Equitable Building Society.

FAMILY MONEY

Consumers' report

The surprising omissions in bank complaints inquiry

This week the spotlight moved to banking services when the National Consumer Council, commissioned by the Government...

The 246-page report effectively gives the banks a clean bill of health - eight out of 10 for money-transmission services...

It's the computer that counts From R. H. Parker Sir, We took the advice of Mr Peter B Brown (Family Money letters) and checked our Midland Bank statements for interest charges...

been calculated according to the bank's tariff. But at no time does the NCC investigate whether the tariff is reasonable in the first place...

Commercial customers generally deal with more than one bank, so they are able to extract good terms on threat of moving their account.

It was liable for bank charges. This I have just discovered from my bank manager that the bank does not have the necessary computer programming to make this come about automatically...

The Editor The Times P.O. Box 7, 200 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1X 8EX. Dear Sir, I read your report on the children's bank accounts on the 10th December...

The NCC would also like to see a change in the law enabling building societies to lend unsecured. These two measures would give the societies the opportunity to compete directly with the banks for personal-account business.

MONEY FUNDS Fund Ailton Home monthly inc 8.65 8.00 01 838 8070...

National Savings Deposit Bond Minimum investment £500 max £50,000, 11% per cent variable at six weeks notice...

Interest quoted gross (basic rate tax deducted at source reclaimable by non-taxpayers). 1 year Lambeth 9% per cent...

Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society advertisement. Extra interest. No strings. Cheltenham Gold 8.25% 11.79% ON £1,000 OR MORE.

Base Lending Rates ABN Bank 9% Barclays 9% BCCI 9% Citibank Savings 11.0%

Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, mentioning 'Capital Gains' and 'A Ro Altern'.

Mortgages

FAMILY MONEY edited by Lorna Bourke

Unit trusts

Policy option

Investors with a maturing London Life endowment policy will now have the option of reinvesting the proceeds in a London Life unit-linked investment bond.

Loans link

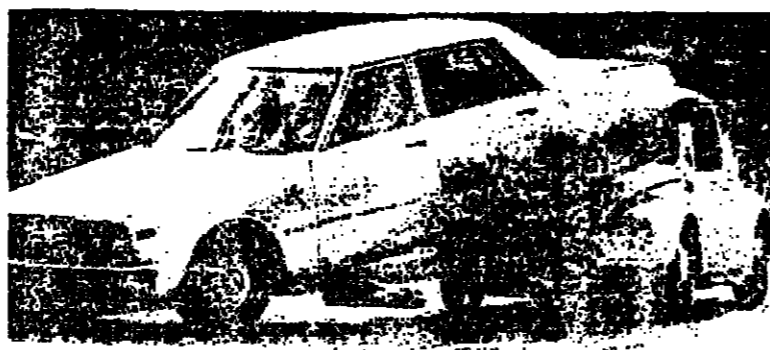
Personal loans from Midland Bank are available to investors who keep a minimum of £100 in Nationwide Building Society's Flexaccount.

Tax surprise

Startling differentials in top rates of tax come to light in a new guide Personal Taxes Around the World, produced by the international accountants, Spicer Oppenheim.

Mortgage hope

Housebuyers having difficulty getting a mortgage should try Skippon Building Society, which announces this week that it has funds available to lend to members and non-members.



Some insurance premiums can be discounted if more than one car is to be covered

Dearer motoring

Legal and General is increasing motor insurance premiums by 7 per cent. "But the company says: defending its price like a number of car groups have been reduced for rating purposes, and a whole series of discounts have been introduced."

Incentives book

Small businesses needing to know how to get the most out of Government and local authority incentive schemes should obtain a copy of Robson Rhodes, the accounts' latest publication.

Government incentives and assistance for industry in the UK sets everything from youth employment subsidies to EEC loans and grants to the coal and steel industry.

Chip chat

Help is at hand for the difficult business of choosing a computer. The Institute of Chartered Accountants has published a guide called Making a Success of Microcomputing in your Business.

the authors, are founder members of the Microcomputer Advisory Service at Manchester University. Ben Farnell is a consultant with the Small Firms Advisory Service at the Department of Industry.

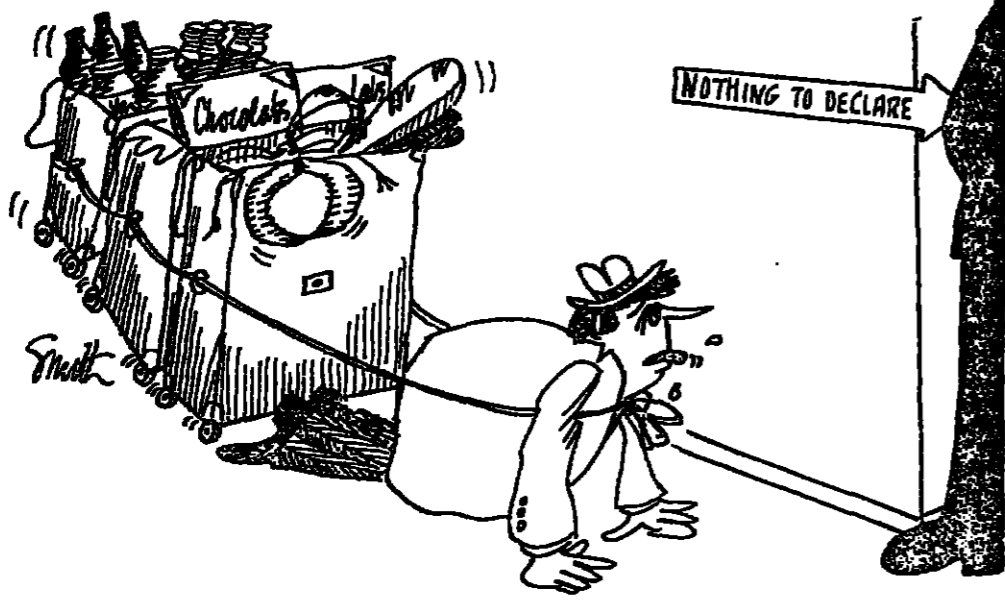
Holiday credit

Holidaymakers who book a holiday through Intasun will be offered revolving credit facility from Boston Trust and Savings which allows them to borrow up to £3,000 at an annual rate of 23.8 per cent.

Mortgages

Home loans queues may disappear

Home loans will be easier to come by in the New Year and mortgage queues may disappear altogether. This will exert upward pressure on house prices so avoid delay if you are thinking of moving house.



Cross-Channel shopping

Preparation will help to unlock quayside value

There are only six cross-Channel shopping days to Christmas and already the men are in a panic. Spouses who would not be seen dead in their local supermarket seem to take to Continental shopping like ducks to water.

You can bring back up to seven litres of wine per person from France, provided you bring no other alcohol, or 50 litres of beer, which is less than half price at home.

lobsters crawling round the hypermarket's fish stall. Bulk purchases are probably best made in the hypermarkets, but the smaller town-centre shops are better hunting grounds for the dedicated eater.

Table with 2 columns: Item, Price. Includes Cotes du Berger (bottle), Olive Oil (1/2 litre), Grand Coffee (1 lb), Credou (1 lb), Brie (1 lb), Terres de Campagne.

If you are looking for more valuable alternatives to book tokens, silk ties or hampers from Fortnum and Mason to give this Christmas, then pause a moment to consider how much of your estate might go to the tax man.

Estate duty Play Santa Claus and cut capital transfer taxation

each this year under the annual exemption and £250 in separate gifts to any number of individuals. Capital gains tax can also be relevant on gifted assets, although currently there is a £100 small gifts exemption (due to be repealed in 1984).

be helped in this way if they are not taxpayers. It is important to be aware that income arising from any gifts made by parents to minor children will be assessed on the parents.

Advertisement for Barlow Clowes & Partners 'A Roll-Up Alternative'. Features 'Capital Gains' and 'No Initial Fees'.

Advertisement for 'Insurance Easy steps to cover a slip-up'. Discusses household contents insurance.

Large advertisement for 'COME IN ROLL-UP INVESTORS YOUR TIME'S UP'. Promotes 'EXTRA VALUE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT' with a 'JAN 1ST' coupon.

FAMILY MONEY

Unit trust performance

The figures show the value on December 1 of £100 invested 12 months, and three years ago respectively, on an offer-to-offer price basis, net income reinvested. Figures supplied by Planned Savings.

Table with columns for FINANCIAL, GROWTH, and various unit trust names and their performance metrics over 12 and 36 months.

INCOME

Table listing income unit trusts such as Cannon Income, F&C Capital, and others, with their 12-month and 36-month performance.

OVERSEAS

Table listing overseas unit trusts such as Chiefan High Inc, Lawson High Yield, and others, with their 12-month and 36-month performance.

SPECIALIST

Table listing specialist unit trusts such as Aik'n Hum E & R, Tyndall Nat Res, and others, with their 12-month and 36-month performance.

HOUSE BUYERS BILL

Lawyers aim to get in on the Act. The surprise success yesterday of Mr Austin Mitchell's House Buyers Bill means it now goes to committee stage where it is generally thought the Government will do its best to kill it off.

Mr Lee says without this type of 'dout' individual firms of solicitors will be powerless when the banks and building societies undertake their own conveyancing and are able to negotiate exclusive deals with the various statutory bodies and the computer companies supplying the equipment.

Table of Unit Trust Prices - change on the week, listing various unit trusts and their price changes.

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Large advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured by a large 'A' and 'P' graphic, containing text about 'The No. 1 for younger...' and '£3 open membership bank and a...'

AND THE FIRST LITTLE PIGGY WENT HOME.



The NatWest Piggy Bank is an exciting new saving scheme for younger children, designed around a family of beautiful porcelain pigs.

It works like this.

£3 opens a Piggy Bank Account, of which £1 covers membership. This includes a delightful "Woody Westminster" piggy bank and a saving pack.

The pack contains everything your child will need to run a NatWest Piggy Bank Account; membership card, paying-in book, wallet, explanatory brochure, account record book, Woody's Wobbly wall chart and painting crayons.

At the regular statement despatch dates in July and January, provided enough has been saved, the young NatWest Piggy Banker will receive the next piggy in the family absolutely free.

First, Woody's sister Annabel when the balance reaches £25, then elder brother Maxwell at £50, and mother and father - Lady Hilary and Sir Nathaniel - at £75 and £100 respectively.

Interest is paid twice a year in June and December initially at 5½%. Unlike the Building Societies, the NatWest Piggy Bank pays interest without deducting income tax.

The Piggy Bank is no ordinary saving scheme. The fun of collecting all five piggies provides a series of goals which will positively encourage your child to save.

For full details, trotter long to the Piggy Bank today.



NatWest
The Action Bank

National Westminster Bank PLC 41 Lombury, London EC2P 2BP

FOOTBALL: ARSENAL CHAIRMAN IS FORCED TO ACT OVER MANAGER UNDER PERSONAL STRESS

Charlton and Venables enter the reckoning as Neill is dismissed

By David Miller

A week ago Arsenal's chairman Peter Hill-Wood's intention was to stay calm in adversity. Yesterday the club decided to dismiss their manager, Terry Neill. The decision was forced by an acceptance that Neill has been under more personal stress than his urbane Irish humour ever allowed to be publicly apparent.

The most obvious possible successor to Neill, who has two years of his contract to run, are the currently available Jack Charlton and I would expect Terry Venables, whose contract with Queens Park Rangers expires next autumn. For the moment Neill's assistant Don Howe, who last year turned down the opportunity of joining the FA on a full-time basis, will be in charge, starting at home to Watford today.

Howe would be a candidate. Hill-Wood said yesterday, when the position is advertised, but it would probably make sense in Arsenal's present circumstances for a total change from the Neill/Howe regime. Although Howe, an outstanding coach who also worked with Bertie Mee's championship-winning side, was responsible for giving coherence to Ron Greenwood's squad in the World Cup, it is not logical to suppose that as former No 2 he would succeed Neill here, by Arsenal's standard, failed.

I think Hill-Wood will want a combination of several characteristics: the man to take command of London's most famous club - by which I do not intend any slight upon illustrious neighbours Tottenham Hotspur, in whose shadow Arsenal have lived uncomfortably in the past two or three seasons.

Established proficiency of coaching success and leadership



Charlton: forthright.



Venables: under contract.

must be taken for granted, but I think Hill-Wood, who succeeded his father as chairman, will also want a forthright character capable of controlling and inspiring star players. Charlton is that kind of man, even if his direct North Eastern conversational manner occasionally turns Highbury's marble halls a shade of blue, a contrast to Neill's polite blarney and the correct bureaucratic manner of Mee.

The question must be whether Charlton would want the London life, would forego his love of going shooting with his dog on the Yorkshire moors; whether he still has the energy at 50 for the enormous challenge which Arsenal would offer and the achievement they would expect, even if he did, in vain, hope to be interviewed for Bobby Robson's job with England.

Venables, of course, is the archetypal Londoner, and it must remain to be seen if he will apply while at present under contract, in which case Arsenal would have to seek

permission from Jim Gregory to discuss the possibilities. Hill-Wood would certainly not breach the gentleman's agreement not to poach other club's managers, and indeed Luton's chairman Denis McGinley was quick to state yesterday that it approached for the admirable David Pleat, he would be obliged to say no. "He is very good, and we intend to keep him."

In fact, it must be wondered whether Arsenal would want an essentially low-key manager such as Pleat, or Graham Taylor, who has had such a remarkable success for the lower divisions with Watford. It will also be suggested by outsiders that Arsenal should consider Lawrie McMenemy, if he was interested, but I think it is improbable that Hill-Wood would go for him. Sadly, the time has passed when Arsenal would be interested in Miljanic from Yugoslavia, for he is now past his prime and taken up with earnings hard currency in Kuwait. He missed his chance

in 1974 when Arsenal first went for him. When that innovative move failed, they appointed Neill.

He took them to three successive FA Cup Finals, of which they won only the middle one, in 1979 against Manchester United. He spent £7.5 million, of which he recouped £4.5 million, but he was severely criticised two seasons ago for allowing Brady and Stapleton to leave, and several more recent expensive signings such as Chapman from Stoke, the Yugoslav Petrovic and Nicholas from Celtic this season, have not been successful. He recently paid £500,000 for Caton, of Manchester City, and it remains to be seen whether, under new direction, Caton can help to stop the undoubted rot which has set in.

United were back in front within a minute. Clemence had already watched Stapleton fire over from close range, and saved from Graham before turning aside another effort from Stapleton. From the ensuing corner, nothing short of a steamroller was going to deny Moran, who forcefully claimed his first goal since early September.

Clemence's first goal, having Stapleton, was beaten again by the next corner, Graham heading in at the far post in the seventy-third minute. But Tottenham replied immediately, Falco being given the chance to score when he fired from the edge of the box, his fifth goal in five games in two years.

Moran added United's fourth in the eightieth minute after a terrific nutmeg by Clemence.



Wallace: going all out.

could hardly wait to put his players through a vigorous practice match. Dundee so far, have not been a supporter of his new club before becoming a player with, among others their great rivals Dundee United, can prove an outstanding leader. But Rangers are so much more confident nowadays that it is difficult to visualize them dropping a point this afternoon, even though they will be without the suspended McAdam and Redford.

Celtic also have three players out of action for their visit to play Hearts at Tynecastle and the new signing from Stirling Albion, John Colquhoun, may come into contention for a place in the team.

refuse to play before the cameras it a better offer is not forthcoming. Ted Croker, the FA secretary, said last night that the reduced offer reflected the contrasting financial positions of the FA and the PFA. He said that resources had been stretched. They had to make an additional £1,180,000 payment over the next five years to Wembley Stadium towards a £4m refurbishment scheme.

Crocker claimed that PFA finances were in a "very satisfactory state". Last year almost £300,000 was available for transfer to PFA reserves.

Graham and Moran push United to the top

By Stuart Jones Football Correspondent

Manchester U.....4 Tottenham H.....2

Tottenham Hotspur hit back twice with goals from Brazil and Falco at Old Trafford last night but could not stop Manchester United gaining the victory that put them back at the top of the first division. Graham and Moran shared United goals.

The opening dozen minutes were liberally sprinkled with errors but that should not be surprising. The two most attacking sides in the country have the nerve and the imagination to play outside the textbook and more than that they respect the referee to the advantage of adventure. That is their respective strength and the foundation for their popularity.

The mistakes were committed by Thomas, who allowed Robson to hit Tottenham's bar, by Graham, who let Falco in to take on Bailey, and by Stevens and Clemence. They each felt that Graham's low cross was the other's responsibility. Robson merely watched it drift in front of them and inside the far post.

United deserved the lead, if not in such bizarre circumstances, for taking the initiative and newness was more apparent than in midfield where Hoddle was overshadowed by his England colleagues, Wilkins and Robson. But the most acute losses came from Mühren, restored to the United side after injury.

With featherweight chips, he released both Wilkins and Robson and then, encouraged to go forward on his own terms, he sent a neat volley headed off the line by Falco. Yet United's defence, with Duxbury moving over to replace the absent McQueen, suffered moments of anxiety as Tottenham in turn pushed forward.

Their equaliser in the fifty-third minute was a personal breakthrough for Brazil, who must have regarded Old Trafford more like the Old Bailey so much of the first half. After Hoddle's job had been nodded down by O'Reilly, he scored his first League goal for Tottenham this season with a spectacular overhead kick.

United were back in front within a minute. Clemence had already watched Stapleton fire over from close range, and saved from Graham before turning aside another effort from Stapleton. From the ensuing corner, nothing short of a steamroller was going to deny Moran, who forcefully claimed his first goal since early September.

Clemence's first goal, having Stapleton, was beaten again by the next corner, Graham heading in at the far post in the seventy-third minute. But Tottenham replied immediately, Falco being given the chance to score when he fired from the edge of the box, his fifth goal in five games in two years.

Moran added United's fourth in the eightieth minute after a terrific nutmeg by Clemence.

Manchester United: G. Bailey, R. Moses, A. Abbotson, R. Wilkins, K. Moran, M. Duxbury, R. Robson, A. Mühren, F. Stapleton, N. Whitelock, G. O'Reilly, D. Thomas, G. Roberts, G. Stevens, S. Falco, A. Dick. Referee: A. Saunders (Newcastle).

Interfined by UEFA for missiles

Zurich (Reuters) - The European Football Union (UEFA) has fined Inter Milan an amount of £2,500 after incidents at two of their UEFA Cup matches. On Thursday's disciplinary committee announced yesterday a fine of £2,500 for the throwing of a missile at the referee during the third round match against Austria Vienna in Milan on December 9. The match ended in a 1-1 draw, but the Austrian club was fined £2,500 for the quarter-finals on 3-2 aggregate.

Share issue raises only £62,500

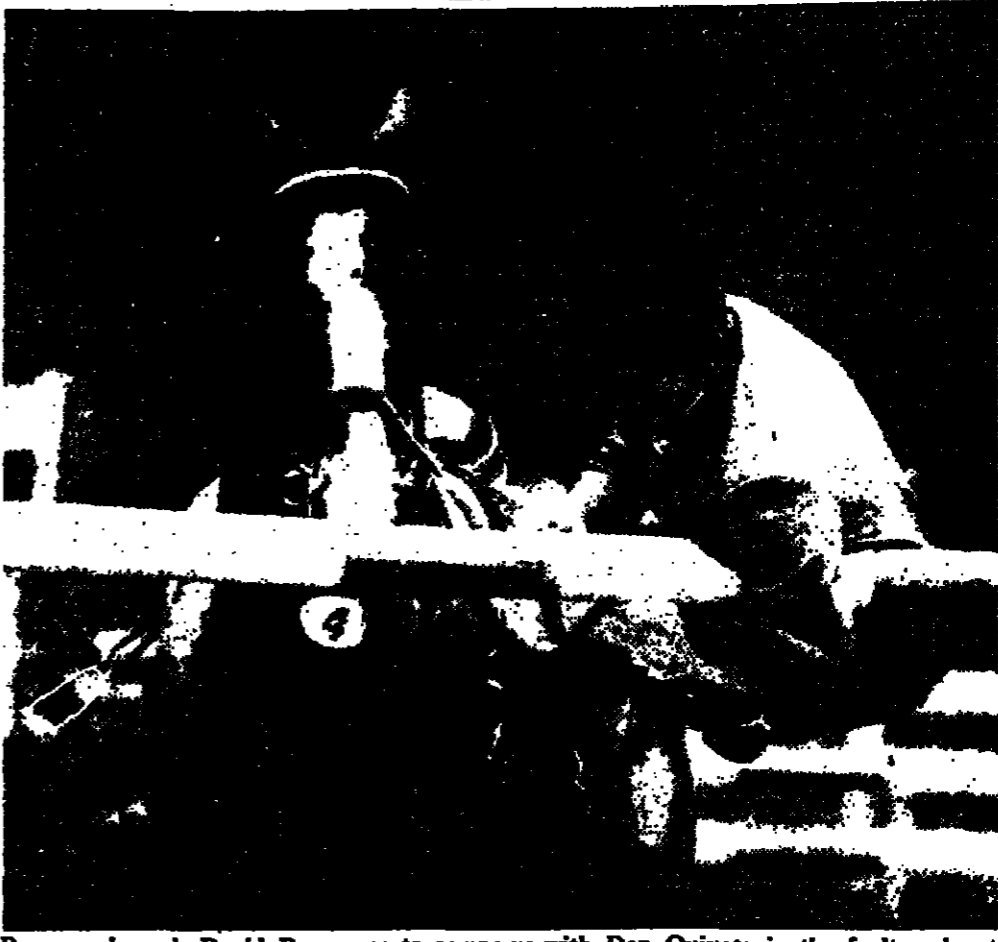
Birmingham City, weighed down by debts of £1.25m at the end of last year, has raised only £62,500 from its £250,000 share issue. Keith Coombes, the chairman, said at yesterday's annual meeting that administrative costs would be £100,000, and therefore the club could not be as generous as they would have liked in backing Ron Saunders, the manager, in the transfer market.

The resignation of Richard Burman, the club's financial director, was partly blamed for the lack of big money invested before the share issue closed on Thursday. Mr Burman had questioned whether the club should continue to trade because of a deficiency of £606,000 between assets and liabilities.

Saunders, who said that he had been quoted £300,000 and £200,000 for two players he wants, told shareholders of the mass occupation of the club. He said: "In the last 12 months I have become a very efficient cost accountant."

Darlington Football Club may be evicted from their Feethams ground. The club's 21-year lease expires on December 31 and at present they have no new agreement on a rent increase with Darlington Cricket Club, the landlord. The original rent of £400 a year, agreed in 1962, is being increased to £5,000 a year, a rent which the football club say they can not afford.

EQUESTRIANISM



Progress barred: David Bowen parts company with Don Quixote in the fault and out competition. Photograph: Ian Stewart.

Skelton takes Everest stable to second Olympia summit

By Jenny MacArthur

The powerful Everest stable gained their second victory in two days when Nick Skelton took first place on the Swedish-bred Everest Cat in the Copac Courvoisier fault and out at yesterday's Olympia international show jumping championships. The previous night Liz Edgar had won the main competition, riding Everest Forever.

In October Sutton won the Whitbread young riders championship at the Horse of the Year Show, also on Diamond T. Unlike that class, yesterday's event was of a high standard, and eight out of the 20 starters went clear. "It was a nice, straightforward course," was Sutton's verdict.

This young rider, the 1982 leading junior, spent six months last year at Stephen Hadley's yard in Warwickshire and six weeks with Lars Soderholm in Oxfordshire. The experience he gained at those two establishments is reflected in the successful transition he has made from junior to young rider classes.

Mrs Edgar's victory in the Norwich Union Turkey Stakes on

Vauxhall Opel Bedford young show jumper of the year event riding Miss Tina Rose's nine-year-old, Diamond T. He beat Michele Lewis, 30, the 1981 young riders national champion, by 4 of a second. Sutton also finished third on his father's Miss Millicent, who was jumping for the first time since injuring her shoulder a fortnight ago.

Thursday night showed once again that as a stylist she is without peer. Riding the German-bred Everest Forever, she achieved a round of sheer perfection in the 12-horse jump-off.

Taking such a short route around the six fences that they never appeared to be hurrying, they clipped half a second off the time of John Whitaker and Ryan's Son. This year's biggest money-winner, who finished second, Lesley McNaught, who left the Edgars' Warwickshire yard earlier this year, rode with characteristic determination to finish third on Skion Milk supplier's Bartarella. David Broom on Last Resort put up a fine challenge and was up on his sister's time, but unluckily hit the middle part of the final combination.

COBBER COLLEGE FALLOUT AND OUT: 1. Everest Cat (N. Skelton) 0.48.2 sec. 2. Everest Cat (M. Lewis) 0.52.4. 3. The Crack (W. Muller) 0.52.4. 4. 48.12. Vauxhall Opel Bedford Young Show Jumper (N. Skelton) 0.25.0. 25.0. 25.0. 25.0. 2. Antigua (M. Lewis) 0.25.0. 25.0. 25.0. 25.0. Mrs Edgar's victory in the Norwich Union Turkey Stakes on

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ATHLETICS

Long runs stop short for women

By Pat Butcher

The women's distance running, lobby looks as if it has been blocked. A council meeting of the International Amateur Athletic Federation in Manila has rebuffed attempts by a group, including Grete Waitz of Norway, to have the 5,000 metres and 10,000 metres events added to the women's programme for the Olympics.

Earlier this year, the International Women's Running Committee filed an action against the International Olympic Committee and the IAAF in Los Angeles, the city where next year's Olympic Games are to be held. But Mrs Waitz, the president of the IAAF, said in Manila yesterday: "The courts can't force us - or 172 nations in the federation. If they do, pretty soon they'll be telling us when to wake up."

That is perhaps a dangerous comment to make for the president of an association noted in the past for a certain solemnity. Yet, given the fact that the women's 5,000 metres of its kind in the world, it has been moving fairly rapidly to democratise itself even though the movement could be characterised as a forceful rearguard action against commercial interests who threatened to take over athletics.

Dr Nebiolo's comments were made yesterday on the first day of the three-day council meeting. It was in tandem with the announcement that there will be a track 10,000 metres for women at the World Cup in Canberra in 1985 and at the next world championships in Rome in 1987.

The 3,000 metres track race for women was not added to the Olympic programme in 1980 but one of the first events on the Olympic programme next year will be the women's marathon, which follows the successful inclusion of the 10,000 metres in the European championships in Athens in 1982 and the world championships in Helsinki.

SPORTS COUNCIL

Government's move to help combat drug abuse

By John Winder

The Government is to consider making provision of Sport Council grants to sporting bodies conditional on their instituting tests against the use of drugs by sportsmen.

Neil Macfarlane, the Minister for Sport, said in a debate in the Commons yesterday that he would discuss with the Department of Health and Social Security the possibility of a change in the present regulations which allow the import of some "prescription only" drugs from abroad for the recipients' own use. He indicated that what he had in mind was a change to make such imports for authorised individuals only.

Mr Macfarlane said many drugs, including anabolic steroids, came into this category. He said: "My investigations suggest that we might be able to do so in the United Kingdom to inhibit the activities of Mr Paul Townsend and others like him who ply their destructive trade."

The matter had been raised by Mr Colin Mynnihan, Conservative MP for Lewisham East, who coxed the British rowing eight in 1978 and won a world gold medal with the British Olympic eight in 1980 and is also a member of the British Boxing Board of Control.

He said there should be no reason for not publishing the names of those on whom drugs tests had been found to be positive. It was time to lift the shroud of secrecy covering tests. "Mr Paul Townsend earns a black market income from an address in France from which he sends out dangerous drugs, some of which has a known side-effects."

A corporate will by a few people in certain powerful international bodies was required to stop the drugs trade.

They should be concerned, not just with a handful of medal winners, but with hundreds of young people, who, if the sporting world did not act, would be the drug addicts who were the road to follow.

BADMINTON

English girls eliminated

Jakarta (Reuters) - All four English girls within reach of the semi-finals of the Badminton Grand Prix tournament here last night were defeated.

Kirsten Larsen of Denmark beat Helen Troke 11-7, 11-4 to take her place in the semi-finals along with Chinese player Zhang Ailing, Li Lingwei and Han Aiping, who all beat English rivals.

Zhang beat Sally Podger 11-6, 11-5. Li crushed to 11-7, 11-3. Karen Beckman and Han, who upset the world champion Li on Thursday, clinched group "B" with an 11-2, 6-11, 11-3 triumph over Jane Webster.

In the men's singles Steve Baddeley went the same way. The English player was beaten by Morten Frost. The tall dane, who

had predicted an Indonesian triumph ensured his triumph in group "C" 15-11, 15-12 to earn a semi-final with Malaysia's Malaysian completed a luckless week for the unfortunate Iuk Sugarto of Indonesia.

The England champion Luan Jin of China completed the destruction of Indonesia's three-man team when he beat Liem Swie King to reach the final four.

MEM'S SINGLES: Group A: K. Larsen (Den) 9-4, 11-5; H. Troke (Eng) 11-7, 11-3; M. Frost (Den) 11-7, 11-3; S. Podger (Eng) 11-6, 11-5. Group B: Z. Ailing (China) 11-4, 11-2; L. Lingwei (China) 11-2, 11-10; H. Aiping (China) 11-3, 8-11, 11-3.

WOMEN'S SINGLES: Group A: K. Larsen (Den) 9-4, 11-5; H. Troke (Eng) 11-7, 11-3; M. Frost (Den) 11-7, 11-3; S. Podger (Eng) 11-6, 11-5. Group B: Z. Ailing (China) 11-4, 11-2; L. Lingwei (China) 11-2, 11-10; H. Aiping (China) 11-3, 8-11, 11-3.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL EUROPEAN CUP: Semi-final, second round: Barcelona 81, Benfica 74; Bona Saragosa 88, Combarca Ceru 84; Maccabi Tel Aviv 84, Real Madrid 74. MORAG CUP: Quarter-final group: Olympique Antibes 77, Bayer Leverkusen 73, FC Bayern Munich 73, Borussia Dortmund 73. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION: Chicago Bulls 113, New York Knicks 107. Final positions: 1. East Germany, 2. Poland, 3. Romania, 4. West Germany, 5. Czechoslovakia, 6. Bulgaria, 7. East Germany, 8. Czechoslovakia, 9. Bulgaria, 10. East Germany, 11. Poland, 12. Romania, 13. USSR, 14. West Germany, 15. East Germany, 16. Poland, 17. Czechoslovakia, 18. Bulgaria, 19. USSR, 20. Romania, 21. East Germany, 22. Poland, 23. Czechoslovakia, 24. Bulgaria, 25. USSR, 26. Romania, 27. East Germany, 28. Poland, 29. Czechoslovakia, 30. Bulgaria, 31. USSR, 32. Romania, 33. East Germany, 34. Poland, 35. Czechoslovakia, 36. Bulgaria, 37. USSR, 38. Romania, 39. East Germany, 40. Poland, 41. Czechoslovakia, 42. Bulgaria, 43. USSR, 44. Romania, 45. East Germany, 46. Poland, 47. Czechoslovakia, 48. Bulgaria, 49. USSR, 50. Romania, 51. East Germany, 52. Poland, 53. Czechoslovakia, 54. Bulgaria, 55. USSR, 56. Romania, 57. East Germany, 58. Poland, 59. Czechoslovakia, 60. Bulgaria, 61. USSR, 62. Romania, 63. East Germany, 64. Poland, 65. Czechoslovakia, 66. Bulgaria, 67. USSR, 68. Romania, 69. East Germany, 70. Poland, 71. Czechoslovakia, 72. Bulgaria, 73. USSR, 74. Romania, 75. East Germany, 76. Poland, 77. Czechoslovakia, 78. Bulgaria, 79. USSR, 80. Romania, 81. East Germany, 82. Poland, 83. Czechoslovakia, 84. Bulgaria, 85. USSR, 86. Romania, 87. East Germany, 88. Poland, 89. Czechoslovakia, 90. Bulgaria, 91. USSR, 92. Romania, 93. East Germany, 94. Poland, 95. Czechoslovakia, 96. Bulgaria, 97. USSR, 98. Romania, 99. East Germany, 100. Poland, 101. Czechoslovakia, 102. Bulgaria, 103. USSR, 104. Romania, 105. East Germany, 106. Poland, 107. Czechoslovakia, 108. Bulgaria, 109. USSR, 110. Romania, 111. East Germany, 112. Poland, 113. Czechoslovakia, 114. Bulgaria, 115. USSR, 116. Romania, 117. East Germany, 118. Poland, 119. Czechoslovakia, 120. Bulgaria, 121. USSR, 122. Romania, 123. East Germany, 124. Poland, 125. Czechoslovakia, 126. Bulgaria, 127. USSR, 128. Romania, 129. East Germany, 130. Poland, 131. Czechoslovakia, 132. Bulgaria, 133. USSR, 134. Romania, 135. East Germany, 136. Poland, 137. Czechoslovakia, 138. Bulgaria, 139. USSR, 140. Romania, 141. East Germany, 142. Poland, 143. Czechoslovakia, 144. Bulgaria, 145. USSR, 146. Romania, 147. East Germany, 148. Poland, 149. Czechoslovakia, 150. Bulgaria, 151. USSR, 152. Romania, 153. East Germany, 154. Poland, 155. Czechoslovakia, 156. Bulgaria, 157. USSR, 158. Romania, 159. East Germany, 160. Poland, 161. Czechoslovakia, 162. Bulgaria, 163. USSR, 164. Romania, 165. East Germany, 166. Poland, 167. Czechoslovakia, 168. Bulgaria, 169. USSR, 170. Romania, 171. East Germany, 172. Poland, 173. Czechoslovakia, 174. Bulgaria, 175. USSR, 176. Romania, 177. East Germany, 178. Poland, 179. Czechoslovakia, 180. Bulgaria, 181. USSR, 182. Romania, 183. East Germany, 184. Poland, 185. Czechoslovakia, 186. Bulgaria, 187. USSR, 188. Romania, 189. East Germany, 190. Poland, 191. Czechoslovakia, 192. Bulgaria, 193. USSR, 194. Romania, 195. East Germany, 196. Poland, 197. Czechoslovakia, 198. Bulgaria, 199. USSR, 200. Romania.

CRICKET SHEFFIELD SHERIFF: Perth: Queensland 286 for 5, (A. R. Border 80 v. Western Australia, 2. N. Waugh 54, 3. S. Waugh 34, 4. P. Sheel 27 for 2; South Australia 27 for 2.

FOOTBALL AGENT'S LEAGUE: Southampton 2, Norwich 0; Old Boys 2, Argenteos 2; Independiente 2, Nueva Chicago 1, Racing Cordoba 1; Temperley 0, San Lorenzo 0; Velez Sarsfield 1, Talleres Cordoba 2, Talleres Cordoba 2, Huracan 0, Racing 2, Union Santa Fe 2, Rosario Central 1, Ferro Carril Oeste 0, Platense 2, Boca Juniors 1.

SKIJING: Cindy Nelson, a veteran Olympic medal winner, should be fit to participate in the winter Olympic Games at Sarajevo in February, despite injuring a knee this week.

A Christmas bargain in store at Carrow Road

By Vince Wright

Norwich City versus Coventry City is not usually a fixture to quicken the pulse but this afternoon's match proved an ideal excuse to forgo Christmas shopping. With Manchester United having played Tottenham Hotspur last night, Carrow Road becomes the unlikely venue for the match of the week but they are reluctant, almost unflinching clubs are not only confounding informed opinion by their high placings but have done so through skilful, adventurous football.

Norwich and Coventry are managed by men who prefer to let their players do the talking. Ken Brown and Bobby Gould are enhancing their reputations by the week but they are reluctant, almost embarrassed, by the praise which has rightly come their way. The success of Brown and Gould is another reminder that one does not have to be an exceptional footballer to become a good manager.

No less a team than Liverpool can bear out Coventry's remarkable transformation. Joe Fagan's men suffered one of their rare, heavy defeats at Highfield Road last week, a result which moved Coventry to fourth. They will need to show similar form today if they are to continue their climb because Norwich are trying to equal a club record of seven successive victories.

Devine, now a more attractive player than he was with Arsenal, will probably be recalled by Norwich's midfield if he passes a fitness test on 13. Coventry, not surprisingly are unchanged.

Liverpool's home match against Nottingham County is more interesting than it might appear. Liverpool's greatest strength has been their ability to bounce back after a defeat and that will be put to the test against a County side which thrashed Sunderland 6-1 last week. Over the years they have made a name of beating the best and losing to the worst and it is not beyond them to spring a surprise today.

The match at Anfield will be a homecoming for the former Liverpool defender, Larry Lloyd, who is now in charge of County. County expect to be unchanged but

Test for Knox is to stop Rangers setting record

By Hugh Taylor

Liverpool play Johnson instead of Whelan in midfield. Johnson asked for a transfer when dropped a week ago and another unsettled player, Hodgson, is chosen as a substitute.

West Ham United are waiting to pounce should Liverpool fail but first they have to improve on an appalling record at Nottingham Forest's City Ground. West Ham have lost more times at Forest than any other ground and indeed have failed to score there since 1969 when Geoff Hurst was on target. The midfield player, Pike, is the only doubt from the side which beat Arsenal at Anfield last week despite a dressing down from their manager, Brian Clough. After last week's defeat at Watford.

The last named has been linked with Arsenal who make a late selection from 14 for their game against Watford at Highbury. O'Leary is almost certain to return to the defence after missing two matches with a leg injury and there may be places for Sunderland, Cork and O'Shea.

Two clubs in even worse straits than Arsenal are Wolverhampton Wanderers, who are bottom, and Stoke City, bottom but one, and they meet at Molineux, Burridge, Palmer, Daniel and Eves could be recalled by Wolves, although they are all available for transfer. For Stoke, Thomas, James and Mellroy have reported fit from international duty and are added to the team that lost 4-2 at home to Luton Town.

A young man in a hurry, Archie Knox, the new manager of Dundee, is presented with an unusual challenge as he takes charge of the club for the first time today.

At 30 he will be trying to stop the revitalized Rangers from gaining a result of special significance, a victory that will enable Jack Wallace to record his fourth league win in succession, something which has not happened in the club's history since 1979.

Whether this has been due to the competitiveness of the premier division or the shortcomings of Rangers does not concern the bluff manager, who growls: "I don't know. The fact is, we've had three wins in a row. We are beginning to play the way I want us to play and we are going all out for a fourth victory today." Commitment is Wallace's gospel and Rangers have shown their traditional spirit since the new broom arrived.

Today, Dundee supporters will be hoping that Knox can inject the same zest into a flagging team, that he can bring to Denis Park some of the essence of the iron tonic which has turned Aberdeen, where he had been assistant manager for almost four years, into the most sparkling, dedicated team in Scotland this season.

Knox does not intend to hang about. He seeks early success. Indeed, he arrived at the press conference organized to announce his appointment in succession to Donald MacKay carrying a bag containing his training gear and

Halifax in need of home games

The manager of one of the worst supported clubs in the Football Association has called for a revision of the fixture formula. Mickey Bullock, of Halifax Town, said that games should be on a strictly home and away sequence. Halifax played their last home match on November 24 and their next is not until Boxing Day. "Without limited financial resources it makes life very difficult," Bullock said.

Doncaster Rovers, who signed the Southern defender Steve Yates for £7,500.

FA and players in talks

The Football Association and the Professional Footballers' Association will meet in London next Tuesday to try to solve the financial dispute which is threatening the Liverpool versus Newcastle United FA Cup third round tie on January 6, which is due to be televised by the BBC.

The FA have offered the PFA £400,000 this season as their share of television fees instead of the usual £100,000. The Players' Association secretary, Gordon Taylor, has warned that he will order the Liverpool and Newcastle players to

Why the Americans found that ex-Football League managers are best

Disneyland saved by the British

From all over the world they came in the late 1970s, footballers lured by reports of the fabulous wealth to be made in their own special Disneyland - the North American Soccer League (NASL).

The legendary skills of Pelé, Beckenbauer and East were bought, with back-up from four different continents. From renowned internationals to old crocks, the players ran the gamut of nationality and ability.

But it was a different story with the coaches. The transatlantic traffic in ex-English managers left little room for anyone else.

By 1977, 15 of the 24 clubs had a British manager. The names included Noel Cantwell (ex-Manchester United player and Coventry City manager), Eddie Firmani (former Charlton Athletic manager, was reappointed to New York Cosmos in November (having been sacked by the club in 1979). And that flamboyant maverick of English football, Rodney Marsh, has taken charge of Tampa Bay Rowdies after the resignation of Al Miller, an American coach who had been installed with disastrous results - in place of the former Queen's Park Rangers

Selectors seek solution to a central problem

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

The injury to Dodge, the Leicester centre, last weekend has added considerably to the interest in the Christmas club programme in England. His broken leg will prevent him from playing for a minimum of 10 weeks and this weekend the selectors are due to meet to discuss trial teams after pursuing their researches at Bath, Leicester and Coventry.

It is reasonable to assume that centres will be looked at with the most critical of eyes and, in that respect, it is unfortunate that Salmon, capped by New Zealand three times in 1981, has been forced by an ankle injury to drop out of the Harlequins side to play at Bath today. He would have provided a replacement throughout the 1980 grand slam season, with an admirable test.

Bath will be hoping to recover some equilibrium after the defeat last week against Gloucester, but they will be without their captain, Spurrell, who will be absent for six weeks after an operation on a knee.

Cambridge, the hooker is playing for the Anglo-Scots and the obvious replacement for Spurrell, the much-travelled Jones, is also injured. Bath therefore move Hall to open-side flank and retain Turner, while Bess hooks. Harlequins, also defeated last weekend, by Bedford, restore Thompson to the centre.

Dodge's absence from Leicester's ranks may mean an extended run in the centre for Bates, a converted scrum half who has impressed on several previous occasions. He came on as a replacement during last season's John Player Cup final, the last occasion on which, Leicester and Bristol met, when Bristol took the cup for the first time.

The match also gives the Bristol midfield of Barnes, Hogg and Knibbs the opportunity to

Concern over death of Poles

By Chris Thau

The mysterious and bizarre circumstances surrounding the deaths of two Polish players, officials of the Paris-based Fédération Internationale de Rugby Amateur (FIRA).

FIRA meet in emergency session today in Paris to discuss the Polish deaths and their recent failure against Italy in Padua.

Serious doubts are now being expressed about Poland's future participation in the 1984 19-nation championship and the issue was particularly acute as the Poles called off the match only days before it was due to take place and when all the preparations had been completed.

The strange case emerged when FIRA contacted the Polish Federation. The Poles said that they called off the game because of the accidental death of two key players.

According to a reliable source, the first to die was one of the Polish props, Pisek. After the game against Romania in Bucharest, he was found dead in his bed the next morning.

The Romanians wanted a post mortem examination performed but the Polish officials with the team declined and had the body sent to Warsaw.

The mystery has deepened with the death of a second, so far unnamed player in Poland several days later. While the first death, unfortunately as it was, could have been explained, the second case set up a puzzle and made it difficult to be dismissed as a mere accident.

This chain of events raised a series of disturbing questions. Was it drugs? Or did at least one of the two Polish players suffer from a heart complaint? But then why was he allowed to play? It is widely known that players in Eastern Europe are not licensed to play unless they undergo a thorough medical check-up before the beginning of the season.

It is highly unlikely that these questions and many others will ever be answered. However, FIRA should demand a full explanation from the Poles and introduce a matter of precaution regular anti-drug tests for the international games played under its jurisdiction.

FIRA's 19-nation championship, the largest rugby competition anywhere in the world is split into three groups. The senior group of six countries is made up of France, Romania, Morocco, and the Soviet Union, Italy and Poland. The two winners of the second division group gain promotion to the top group.

A spokesman for FIRA said that according to the Federation's bylaws Poland have lost the Padua game by forfeit, although the Italian team were willing to play as a later date.

Top FIRA officials are worried since Poland have played only one game so far and their withdrawal could upset the remaining fixtures against France, Morocco and the Soviet Union.

FIRA is also running an under-19 international tournament with 14 countries but officials in Paris said that the problems of the Polish team could mean that the tournament will not affect the plans for a junior competition scheduled to take place in Poland next year.

Africans run into a surprise at Ipswich

By Pat Butcher

David Moorcroft was in some doubt yesterday about his chances of contesting the International Athletics Club race in Ipswich this afternoon after a midweek stomach upset. But King Hutchings, the English champion, and Steve Harris, his English colleague, will face some formidable opposition from Gidamis Shabanga and Zachariah Barie, of Tanzania, in the 10-kilometre event.

The Africans finished first and second in a five miles road race in Los Angeles last week, both beating 22min 30sec.

The arrived yesterday with Filbert Bayi, the former 1500 metres world record holder, and Sam Ntasia, of Kenya, believing that they had come to run in a road race, but the change to a track race, and the admission yesterday that it is the only way he can run. It cost him the Olympic steeplechase gold medal in Moscow, when his fast early pace reduced him to a crawl on the last lap and he was a victim to Malinowski, the excellent Pole.

At, or near, his peak in 1974 he led the way and broke the world record in the process. It was a sublime performance which made a nonsense of the peacemaking used frequently beforehand, and used so glibly all the time nowadays. An Achilles tendon injury has kept Bayi out of top competition for the past two years but he refuses surgery and is now back up full training without mishap. He plans to run the steeplechase in the Olympics next year.

How to win the Cup

By Mike Bauer

Sydney (Reuter) - Mike Bauer, one of two Americans to reach the last four of the New South Wales open tournament here, issued some strong advice to Australia yesterday after beating Sweden's Anders Jarryd in the quarter-finals. "Power, power and more power - that's what you need to beat the Swedes," Bauer said after defeating Jarryd, 6-7, 6-4, 6-0.

Jarryd was named yesterday in the Swedish team for the Davis Cup final, which begins in Melbourne on December 26, along with Mats Wilander, Hans Simonsson and Joachim Nystrom. Australia have selected Pat Cash, John Fildes, Paul McNamee and Mark Edmondson.

With Sweden the favourites to win the cup for only the second time, Jarryd's defeat will at least give the Australian hope. Bauer added: "I simply overpowered."

Masters field is completed

New York (AP) - Eliot Telescher and Johan Kriek, of the United States, and Tomas Smid, of Czechoslovakia, fill the remaining places in the field of 12 for the Volvo Masters championship at Madison Square Garden from January 10 to 15.

They join Mats Wilander, Ivan Lendl, John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors, Yannick Noah, Jimmy Arias, Jose Higueras, Andre Gornet and Jose-Luis Clerc in the play-off of the Volvo grand prix circuit, which could also determine who is chosen player of the year.

Vilas appeal verdict soon

New York (Reuter) - The Men's International Professional Tennis Council finished hearing an appeal by Guillermo Vilas, of Argentina, against a one-year suspension on Thursday and expect to reach a decision in a few days.

Vilas was suspended and fined \$20,000 in June when the council found that he received \$60,000 from promoters to ensure his appearance in the Rotterdam tournament after some leading players dropped out.

Vilas and his manager, Ion Tiriac, have denied asking for, or receiving, any such money.

Moorhouse's challenge

From Athole Still, Ankara

replace her Redbridge club colleague Jackie Wilton, who has withdrawn on the advice of her coach Mike Higgs, who thinks she is not in top racing condition. Miss Hardcastle, a 27-year-old swimmer from Reading in Berkshire, has been having just taken five seconds from the British 1,500 metres freestyle record. Following her splendid European bronze medal performance in Rome she is unlikely to be overruled by the girls from East Germany who are certain to win the cup for the fourth time. West Germany are in the strongest position to challenge the Russians in the men's competition. They have just completed their short course championships and are in peak condition with the world record holder Michael Gross, who set a new short course mark of 1 min 56.00 sec for 200 metres butterfly, leading their attack.

Although conditions in the pool are far from perfect, several world records are likely to fall as the European nations demonstrate their strength. The Americans will be switching the results with interest, and no little trepidation. They have been bred on Olympic success and need little further confirmation of how hard it is going to be to keep the home crowd happy in Los Angeles.

Imran's return overshadowed by another Miandad century

Hobart (Reuter) - Imran Khan, the Pakistan captain, made only 13 on his return from injury against Tasmania here yesterday but expects to play in the fourth Test match against Australia later this month. After being out of action for two months with a stress fracture of the left shin, Imran managed only one four in his comeback innings before he was caught by Richard Soule, Tasmanian's young wicketkeeper, off the bowling of Peter Faulkner.

Imran had been hoping for a long spell at the wicket to prove his return to fitness and when he was out cheaply, he went straight to bat in the more batting practices. Despite Imran's failure, Pakistan compiled 354 for six on the first day of the four-day match, with Javed

Miandad scoring 141 not out and Salim Malik 80.

Salim played a capable innings, scoring nine fours, but it was Miandad who once again provided the sparkle in Pakistan's performance with his third successive century. Miandad, skipping between the wickets, repeatedly found gaps in the Tasmanian field.

His century was brought up with a confidently-placed cover drive for four followed by two more fours in the next three balls. Barring a helmet against a sometimes wild Tasmanian attack, Miandad pushed the score along at a good pace, his century coming in 183 minutes. In his previous two matches he had scored 106 against Victoria and 131 in the third Test at Adelaide.

Miandad was given a life at

Indians need victory to appease irate fans

Gaithi (Reuter) - India go into today's fifth and final one-day international against West Indies here in an atmosphere of mounting tension.

Without their captain, Kapil Dev, and opener, Sunil Gavaskar, India are desperate to check a run of crushing defeats which has left them trailing 4-0 in the series.

They need victory to avoid a "whitewash" and appease their frustrated supporters, who peled the side with fruit and attacked the team bus after the innings and 46-0 defeat in the first Test match on Tuesday. West Indies also hold an unbeatable 3-0 lead in that six-match series.

Security is already tight in his north-eastern city, the capital of Trinidad, where riotous clashes between the two ethnic groups. More than 3,000 people died and 300,000 were made homeless in the riots.

Kapil Dev withdrew on Wednesday after complaining of soreness in his right knee, which was operated on three years ago. The wicketkeeper, Kirmani, will lead the side in his absence.

The West Indies, skipped by Clive Lloyd, will play for Trinidad. His swift change of mind came after a meeting with All Bacher, who is in charge of the Transvaal side for whom Kallicharran has played for the past two years.

"I spoke to Dr Bacher and have decided to stay on until the end of the tour," Kallicharran told the *Rand Daily Mail* yesterday. "It was an honorary request which prompted me to decide to return home straight after the tour."

Bacher told the South African Press Association: "The whole thing is an unfortunate misunderstanding but I'm sure he will be available in February and March." Neither man would discuss the issues behind the dispute or say how it had been patched up. The *Rand Daily Mail* also said that Kallicharran was rethinking a decision to resign as vice-captain of the team.

The rebels, halfway through their tour, are unbeaten but the fire of their pace attack has been quenched by lifeless pitches and off the field rows about sponsorship have caused ill feeling. To add to their problems, four of the 17-man squad are on the injury list, Lynch has a hamstring injury and Julien, Murray and Simmons have also been receiving treatment.

No price increase Hampshire loss

Leicestershire are to keep membership of the county cricket club at £25 in the hope of attracting new recruits for the coming cricket season. Their Secretary-manager, Mike Turner, says that the club has no intention of raising prices for members but there are a lot of people interested.

Hampshire County Cricket Club lost £41,145 last season compared with a loss of £50,788 the previous year. Their secretary, Jimmy James, said: "We are looking into ways of cutting costs and saving money, but the only losses we cannot expect to make losses for ever and continue to survive."

Busy time for Irish

By George Ace

The Irish selectors face a busy evening following today's final trial at Lansdowne Road. They will convene immediately after the game, when an Irish squad will be named for a training session on December 31 and will also select the Irish Rugby Union President's XV for the match against the English at Ravenhill, Belfast, on January 4.

Rarely does an Irish trial make any great impression on the opinions already held by the selectors. The Irish provincial series. A clear indication of their thinking is apparent in the composition of the Probables side, which includes all of last season's team who shared the five national championships with France, with the exception of light head prop Gerry McLoughlin, who is still under suspension following an off-the-ball incident in a club game, and full back Hugo Mackey, who withdrew with a leg injury. McLoughlin's place goes to the

Duggan and Ulster player Jim McCoy. The stones and 6ft 11in McCoy combines solid scrumming ability with considerable mobility in the loose.

Kearney, the Leinster flanker who has had an impressive inter-provincial record, is expected to lead. He will challenge strongly for O'Driscoll's place.

PROBABLES: J. Murphy (Galwegians), R. Furlong (Ballymore), D. Ryan (Galwegians), M. Kavanagh (Down), M. Finn (Cork), M. O'Connell (Down), T. Ward (St Mary's), J. O'Connell (Down), P. O'Rourke (Down), J. O'Donnell (London Irish), D. Langan (Cork Constitution), M. Keane (London Irish), D. Sweeney (Blackrock), P. Harte (Blackrock), D. Murnaghan (Blackrock), J. Murphy (Blackrock), J. Doyle (Blackrock), J. Langan (Blackrock), H. Hartson (Blackrock), M. O'Connell (Blackrock), J. O'Donnell (Blackrock), J. O'Donnell (Blackrock), D. Sweeney (Blackrock), D. Sweeney (Blackrock).

Win will ensure share of title for South

South of Scotland, who have scored 59 points and conceded only two penalty goals so far in their attempt to retain the Scottish inter-provincial championship, will ensure at least a share of the title if they beat Edinburgh at Myreside this afternoon. A win will give them six points from three games.

The Duke of Wellington, who have already beaten Edinburgh and the North & Midlands, would then be the only district with any chance of preventing the South from winning their seventh title outright. They meet the Borders, who have an unexpected victory there would give them the championship outright for the third time, or, alternatively, a share of it, depending on the result at Myreside.

Had today's match been scheduled for the Borders, there would have been little doubt about the outcome - Edinburgh have never beaten the South outside the city. The county's players are never so comfortable within the capital, however, and have beaten well beaten there more than once. In the corresponding fixture two years ago at Myreside, Andy Irvine (ferry) and Jim Renwick (hawick) shared eight successful penalty kicks in a 12-12 draw.

This afternoon Irvine will not be on duty, having damaged a shoulder at Hugganess last week, but he is expected to return to the Scotland side after a six-month lay-off following a leg injury. Iain Milne is another Lion who will not be there. He reported sick yesterday with influenza and deputised for Norrie Rowan of Broughmuir, capped six times by

The Iron Duke has a lot to answer

Why George Washington is sure to meet her Waterloo

This is all harmless enough. Not so harmless, however, is the practice of dragging historical figures from the past into the present, giving them from seats at traditional sporting occasions, and speculating as to how they might react.

Thus we might read that "if the Iron Duke" (I said Wellington has a lot to answer for) "had been at Twickenham, he would have nodded in approval at the fighting spirit of England's gallant forwards", that "England's last-wicket pair defied Australia with a determination which would have gladdened Colonel Bull, been at Hackett's, or that "had Monty's heart, or that "had the nearest thing you ever saw in your life" which ever since, in newspaper accounts of a myriad sporting contests, has been garbled into "a close run thing".

Henry V exhorting his army before Agincourt is a convenient image for a captain motivating the lads in the dressing room, and Drake ignoring the Armada and stopping to finish his game of bowls will serve for any ice-cool English sportsman in a crisis. When "the Colonel dead" in Newbolt's poem, a schoolboy rallies the ranks in the desert with his cry of "Play up! play up! and the game will be won!"

Waterloo, either in Belgium or at Blundellsands, and retreats from Moscow, when some football club or other lose in Russia, are frequent.

On a smaller scale are show-downs and shoot-outs, deriving from the American West, legend or fact as the case may be. High noon has passed into the vocabulary of sport and become a cliché. I myself have used Jesse James and Dodge City.

I have also used George Orwell, who said that sport is war minus the shooting - which leads me to a final and by no means irrelevant digression. Like generals and battles, authors are useful for leaving the lump of daily journalism. I know that quotations from them may be no more than proof of a retentive memory, but the trumpet-note of a different voice cutting through the journalist's reawakened the reader's interest.

In my time I can remember quoting a mixed bag of Shaw, Saki, Dylan Thomas, Wodehouse, Curdus and Noel Coward, but never Shakespeare. Elizabethan English is a dead language to me. So Henry V has never addressed any of my teams before the battle. I fear he might have confused them.

Gordon Allan

Football and other fixtures

3.0 unless stated	Third division	Scottish premier division
First division	Bolton v Preston N.E.	Aberdeen v Hibernian
Arden v Welford	Bradford City v Bournemouth (2.0)	Dundee United v St Mirren
Blackburn v Burnley	Bristol Rovers v Hull City	Hearts v Celtic
Liverpool v West Ham	Exeter v Millwall	Rangers v Dundee
Norwich v Coventry	Exeter v Sheffield United (2.15)	St Johnstone v Motherwell
Nottingham Forest v Ipswich	Grimsby v Lincoln	Scottish first division
QPR Rangers v Everton	Northampton v Oxford United	Brechin v Alloa
Southampton v Birmingham	Northampton v Oxford United	Clyde v Montrose
Wolverhampton v Stoke	Southend v Wigan Athletic	Falkirk v Arbroath
Second division	Southend v Wigan Athletic	Hibernian v Dundee
Accrington v Crystal Palace	Walsall v Burnley	Kilmarnock v Clydebank
Brighton v Norwich	Walsall v Burnley	Partick v Morton
Cambridge U v Manchester City	Fourth division	Scottish second division
Cardiff v Barnsley	Blackpool v Torquay	Albion v Queen of South
Chelsea v Grimsby	Chastar v Peterborough	Arbroath v Montrose
Derby v Shrewsbury	Chesterfield v Wrexham	Barnhill v East Park
Huddersfield v Middlesbrough	Colchester v Halifax	Foxes v East Park
Oldham v Fulham	Darlington v Aldershot	Queen's Park v East Stirling
Sheffield Wed v Cardiff	Reading v Hartlepool	Shabazz v Stranraer
Swansea v Portsmouth	Rochele v Bristol City	Sittingbourne v Coudebeck
CENTRAL LEAGUE: First division: Everton v Liverpool (2.0)	Swindon v Barnsley	York City v Hereford
SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Dundee v Aberdeen (2.0)	IRISH TRIAL MATCH	
Galwegians v Celtic (2.0)	Probables v Possibles (at Lansdowne Rd 2.30)	
Blackburn v Burnley (2.0)	WELSH CUP	
Cardiff v Barnsley (2.0)	Second round	
Chelsea v Grimsby (2.0)	Aberystwyth v Penryn (2.15)	
Derby v Shrewsbury (2.0)	Aberystwyth v Penryn (2.15)	
Huddersfield v Middlesbrough (2.0)	Amherst v Blackwood (2.15)	
Oldham v Fulham (2.0)	Amherst v Blackwood (2.15)	
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Legality test for EEC budget

From Ian Murray Brussels

The 1984 EEC budget, which was passed by the European Parliament on Thursday, is to be studied by the Community foreign ministers here on Monday. They will be considering whether or not it is legal.

The budget was given its second reading by Parliament in the face of total opposition by British MEPs, who were furious because agreed rebates worth £457m to Britain were put into a special frozen category and can only be released by a further vote of Parliament.



Lights out: A hat-trick of Santas lining up to greet non-smokers on the steam journey. (Photograph: Herbie Knott).

Steaming to Santa

The six-mile Watercross Line steam railway, which runs between Arlesford and Four Marks in Hampshire, is running a service of Santa Specials this weekend.

Judge orders Whitehall 'mole' unmasked

Continued from page 1 sources and has been blown utterly apart. "Anyone who knows Whitehall knows that documents stamped secret extend even to the office loo paper, and it now seems that if a document is Crown property, which applies to 60 or 70 per cent of leaks, then you are automatically bound to return it."

cause to have done so once the "legal juggernaut" had started could have led to criminal charges. Mr Preston said that he had no means of knowing if the identification marks on the secret document would help reveal the "mole."

make certain it would be of no relevance if handed back. But we did not know that for certain. The National Union of Journalists last night condemned the court ruling as "yet another serious attack on press freedom and the right of the public to be told what is being done in its name."

up and the public would be denied information. The Director of Public Prosecutions said last night there would be no criminal proceedings in connection with another government report leaked to The Guardian. A Department of Education and Science report was returned unopened by the newspaper because it was sent in a unstamped envelope.

Letter from New York Down and out in the soup-kitchen queue

Mr Edwin Meese, one of President Reagan's senior aides, said this week that some customers at the soup kitchens in American cities were not poor but were there because the food is free and that's easier than paying for it. Trevor Fishlock joined the queues to find out for himself.

Outside the soup kitchen on West 28th Street men, women and children wait silently in a long line and sniff the smell of stew. Jimmy, the doorman, has control and as one person emerges from the 58-seat canteen another is allowed in. In the three-hour lunch period this place serves more than 400 meals.

No one is asked if he has any money, who he is or what he does. Those who run the Holy Apostles Church soup kitchen keep an open door. They say that the sort of people who come here have had enough of being humiliated. The guests, as they are called, get a free meal, a smile and no questions. Most of them look in need of a square meal and some human warmth. All that is asked is that they eat up and make room for another hungry person.

Today's events

New exhibitions Textile Designs and Drawings by Janet Hunter, Atkinson Gallery, Lord Street, Southampton; Mon to Fri 10 to 5, Thurs and Sat 10 to 1, closed Sun (ends Jan 14).

Lichfield Street, Walsall; Mon to Fri 10 to 6, Sat 10 to 4.45, closed Sun (ends Jan 7). German Glass Today - the only North west showing of this major exhibition of contemporary German glass-making, recent work by Otto Liddell and Keith Gordon, two young artists from the Museum and Art Gallery, Le Mans Crescent, Bolton; Mon to Fri 9.30 to 5.30, Sat 10 to 5, closed Wed and Sun (both end Jan 21).

David Danaldson retrospective, City Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh; Mon to Sat 10 to 5, closed Sun (ends Jan 23). New Additions to the Print Loan Scheme, and work by Simon Bull, Wakefield Art Gallery, Wentworth Terrace, Wakefield; Mon to Sat 10.30 to 12.30 and 1 to 5, Sun 2.30 to 5 (both end Jan 13).

In the garden

Leaves of many plants such as Primula demissa and other species, also hellebores (Christmas and Lenten roses) all die down and tend to become a soggy mess. They should be removed not only in the interests of tidiness but also to remove shelter for pests and any danger the rotting material might be to grow buds just below the surface.

Roads

Wales and West: A35: Single-lane traffic on temporary traffic signals on Aaminster - Honiton road between Kilvington - Loughwood, Devon. A483: Temporary traffic lights, long delays in Wind Street, Ammanford, 4.55. Temporary roundabout at Colwyn Bay, junction with A546.

Weather

Pressure will remain low over southern Britain as a depression with an associated frontal trough moves north-eastwards over England. Gam to midnight London, East Angles, E. W. Midlands, North Wales: Cloudy, occasional rain, drying out sunny intervals. Developing wind SE moderate, locally fresh, becoming variable light; max temp 6 to 8C (43 to 46F).

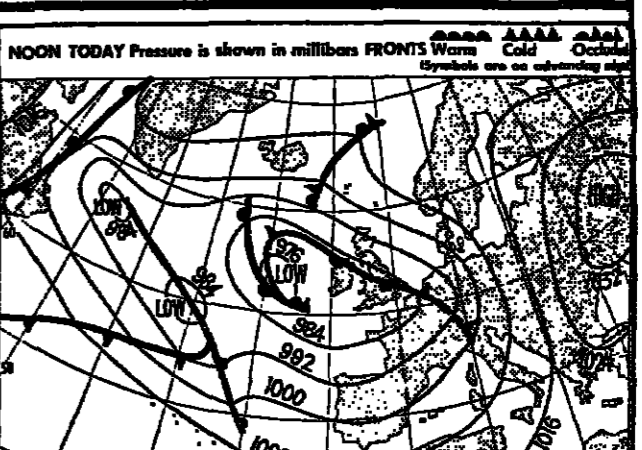


Table with weather data for various cities including London, Glasgow, and others, showing temperature, wind, and cloud cover.

The Times Crossword Puzzle No 16312

1 price of The Times Atlas of the World (comprehensive edition) will be given for the first three correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, 12 Cole Street, London WC9 9JT. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1 through 25. The grid is partially filled with letters, and some cells are empty for the solver to complete.

Anniversaries

Birthe Domestico Cimareno, composer, Aviano, Italy, 1749; Ludwig van Beethoven, baptized Bonn, 1770; Sir Humphry Davy, chemist, inventor of the miner's safety lamp, Penzance 1778; John Greenleaf Whittier, writer and abolitionist, Havertill, Massachusetts, 1807; Deaths: Simon Bolivar, Santa Maria, Colombia, 1830; William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin of Largs, scientist, Netherhall, Strathclyde, 1907.

Anniversaries

Mr Lynda Chalker, Minister of State for Transport, announced in a written Commons reply yesterday that during the Christmas and New Year holidays, from December 24 to January 2, no lane closures were planned on the M1.

Christmas music

Christmas concert by Waynlette Singers, Winchester Cathedral Choir, and London Cornet and Sackbut Ensemble, Winchester Cathedral, Winchester, 7.30. Concert of Carols by Lincoln Musical Society, Lincoln Minster, Lincoln, 7.30.

Cheap flights

British Caledonian has introduced two new fares on flights from Gatwick Airport to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester, which it says saves up to 50 per cent. A special "Week ender Fare" operates outwards on Fridays or Saturdays, with a return on Sunday. This means a return fare of £47 to Manchester and £60 to Edinburgh and Glasgow. The same fares apply for senior citizens on certain flights on weekdays.

The pound

Table showing exchange rates for various currencies including Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and USA.

High tides

Table with high tide information for various locations including London, Glasgow, and others, showing tide times and heights.

The papers

The nice drunk drivers jailed by magistrates in Grays, Essex, must have had the shock of their lives. The Sun says "Such tough sentences are almost unknown. But we hope that from now on, motorists will take them as the norm. It may seem hard to shove people, who are otherwise decent citizens, behind bars. But if the risk of a few days in jail means saving lives at Christmas, then it is well worth it. We're not being killjoys. There is nothing wrong with the cup that cheers - and particularly at this time of the year. But the message that the Essex magistrates are underlining so dramatically is simple: "If you do drink, don't drive."

Down

2 Secured conjunction about a job (8). 3 A wild one in a wild set (8). 4 The girl next door, for example - Amanda (9). 5 Point of balance - in the middle of mass? (6,2,7). 6 Hawthorn - beautiful in a particularly Berkshire Square? (7). 7 Fatty to change too (8). 8 Harry's in trouble (8). 9 Garden, set out and divided (9). 10 Birds around - dead copies (8). 11 Given point, it could be a case of possession (8). 12 Hint at getting - eventually - around (8). 13 Lantern - one broken inside (8). 14 Mixed advance in source of growth (7).

Across

1 Ministry houses causing bird (6). 2 Went to work? Made things easier (8). 3 One of the informers against Hamlet (8). 4 Ireland is quiet, held by old Persian king (6). 5 One one must be to win the girl? (8). 6 Approval of a noisette (6). 7 Check about a break in one's journey (8). 8 Advantage? Hamlet (4). 9 One master back with the flag (4). 10 Bangle soldier around - just cheer up (8). 11 Lag - one in a plot about to return (6). 12 Girl with little ones - they spend nothing on clothes (8). 13 Common chords in sound attempt to get publicity (6). 14 Thoroughly infuses in small amounts (8).

Around Britain

Table with weather data for various locations across Britain, including Scarborough, Brighton, Oxford, and others, showing sun, rain, and temperature.

Abroad

Table with weather data for various international locations including Ajaccio, Alexandria, Algiers, and others, showing sun, rain, and temperature.

A vertical sidebar containing various small advertisements and notices, including 'Judge jails child sex man', 'Challenge over cancelled rig', 'Europe's cash', 'By-cut theory', 'Eagle-eyed', 'Wales decline', 'Habsburg theory', 'Transplant fear', and 'Why chief quits'.